UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA000 032 131 5



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Henry Porter.

THE

HISTORY OF FICTION.


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/historyoffiction02dunliala

THE

HISTORY OF FICTION:

BEING

A CRITICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE MOST CELEBRATED

PROSE WORKS OF FICTION,

FROM THE EARLIEST GREEK ROMANCES TO THE NOVELS OF THE PRESENT AGE.

By JOHN DUNLOP.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by James Ballantyne and Co.

FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

1816.

PN
3451
D82h
1814
v. 2

HISTORY OF FICTION, &c.

HISTORY OF FICTION, &c.

CHAPTER V.

Romances of the Peninsula concerning Amadis de Gaul and his Descendants.—Romances relating to the imaginary Family of the Palmerins.—Catalonian Romances.—Tirante the White.—Partenopex de Blois.

THE reader, who has now toiled through the romances of the Round Table, and those relating to Charlemagne, has not yet completed the whole of his labour:

> Alter erit nunc Tiphys, et altera quae vehat Argo
> Delectos heroas: erunt etiam altera bella.
>
> VIRG. *Ecl.* 4.

Had it been my intention, indeed, merely to compose a pleasing miscellany, I should not only

refrain from analyzing any other romances of chivalry, but should even have omitted many of which an abstract has been given. But the value of a work of the description which I have undertaken, consists, in a considerable degree, in its fulness. The multiplicity of the productions of any species is evidence of the kind of literature which was in fashion at the time of their composition, and therefore indicates the taste of the age. Even the dulness of the fictions of chivalry is, in some degree, instructive, as acquainting us with the monotonous mode of life which prevailed during the periods which gave them birth; while, at the same time, by a comparison of the intellectual powers exhibited in romance with the exertions of the same ages in law, theology, and other pursuits, we are enabled to form an estimate of the employment of genius in those distant periods, and to behold in what arts and sciences it was most successfully displayed.

While the other European nations were so much occupied with romance writing, it was not to be expected that the Portugueze and Spaniards should have altogether neglected a species of composition so fascinating in itself, and at this time so much in vogue. The subject of Arthur, and the topics connected with Charlemagne, had been exhausted,

and it was now requisite to find a new chief and a new race of heroes. Arthur had been selected as a leader in romance, less perhaps from national vanity than from being in possession of some traditional glory, and thus forming a kind of head and support, by which unity was given to the adventures of subordinate knights. Charlemagne was naturally adopted by the romance writers of the neighbouring country as having many analogies with Arthur. In Portugal, however, where we shall find the first great romance of the series on which we are now entering was formed, there seems to have been no prince nor leader who was thus clothed with traditional fame. Accordingly an imaginary hero was chosen, and, as the first romance which was written in the peninsula was possessed of great literary merit, it had an overpowering and subduing effect on succeeding fablers. In imitation of the former author, they continued the family history, supposing, perhaps, that the interest which had been already excited on the subject, which formed the source of their works, would be favourable to their success. This also furnished a certain facility of magnifying their heroes, as it was not difficult to represent each new descendant as surpassing his predecessor. Unfortunately the

successive writers of romance supposed that what had pleased once must please always ; in the same manner as it was long thought necessary that an epic writer should have in his poem the same number of books as Homer, and should employ the same forms of address, comparison, and description. Accordingly the heroes of most romances of the peninsula are illegitimate ; there are usually two brothers, a Platonist and Materialist ; and, in short, a general sameness of character and incident. The opponents of the knights are, however, different from those in the romances of Arthur or Charlemagne ; they are no longer the Saxons or Saracens, but the Turks ; and as the Greek empire was now trembling to its base, many of the scenes of warfare are laid at Constantinople. In some of the concluding romances of the series, indeed, happier fictions are introduced, and an attempt is made to vary with new incidents, and the splendour of eastern enchantments, the perpetual havoc which occurs in the preceding fables. But I am, perhaps, anticipating too much the reflections of the reader, and shall therefore, without farther delay, proceed to

AMADIS DE GAUL,[1]

which has generally been considered as one of the finest and most interesting romances of chivalry. Hence, perhaps, different nations have anxiously vindicated to themselves the credit of its origin. Lopez de Vega, in his Fortunas de Diano, attributes it to a Portugueze lady. On the authority of Nicholas Antonio, Warton has assigned the composition of Amadis de Gaul to Vasco Lobeira, a Portugueze officer, who died at Elvas in 1403, or, according to Sismondi,[2] in 1325. This opinion has been also adopted by Mr Southey, who has entered at considerable length into the reasons on which it is grounded. The original work he believes to be lost, but he conceives that Amadis was first written in the Portugueze language; and he argues that Lobeira was the author, from the concurrent testimony of almost all Portugueze writers, particularly of Gomes Eannes de Zurrara, in his chronicle of Don Pedro de Menezes, which appeared only half a century

[1] Los quatro libros del Cavallero Amadis de Gaula.
[2] De la Literature du midi de l' Europe.

after the death of Lobeira. He also thinks the Portugueze origin of the romance is established from a sonnet by an uncertain poet, but a contemporary of Lobeira, praising him as the author, and from the circumstance that in the Spanish version by Montalvo, it is mentioned that the Infant Don Alphonso of Portugal had ordered some part of the story to be altered.

The French writers, on the other hand, and particularly the Comte de Tressan, in his preface to the Traduction libre d' Amadis de Gaule, have insisted that the work (or at least the three first of the four books it contains) was originally written in French, in the reign of Philip Augustus, or one of his predecessors. His arguments rest on some vague assertions in old French manuscripts, that Amadis had been at one time extant, and on the similarity of the manners, and even incidents, described in Amadis, with those of Tristan and Lancelot, which are avowedly French: he thinks it also improbable that while such hatred subsisted between the French and Spaniards, an author of the latter nation should have chosen a Gallic knight for his favourite hero; but this argument strikes only against a Spanish and not a Portugueze original. To the reasons of Tressan, however, may be added the testimony of one Portugueze poet,

Cardoso, who says that Lobeira translated Amadis from the French by order of the Infant Don Pedro, son of Joan First; and also the assertion of D'Herberay, a translator of Amadis from the Spanish into French, about the middle of the 16th century, who declares that he had seen fragments of a MS. in the Picard language, which seemed to be the original of Amadis de Gaul:—" J' en ay trouvé encore quelque reste d' un viel livre, escrit a la main, en langage Picard, sur lesquel J' estime que les Espagnols ont fait leur traduction, non pas du tout suyvant le vrai original comme l' on pourra veoir par cestuy, car ils en ont obmis en aucuns endroits et augmenté aux autres." The testimony of Bernardo Tasso, author of the Amadigi, a poem taken from the romance, is also against a peninsular origin. To his evidence considerable weight is due, as he lived at a period of no great distance from the death of Lobeira, and from being engaged in a poem on the subject of Amadis, he would naturally be accurate and industrious in his researches. Now the Italian bard is decidedly of opinion, that the romance of Amadis has been taken from some ancient English or Breton history. " *Non e dubbio,*" (says he in one of his letters to Girolamo Ruscelli,) " che lo scrittore di questa leggiadra e vaga invenzione l' ha in

parte cavata da qualche istoria di Bertagna, e poi abbelitola e rendutala a quella vaghezza che il mondo cosi diletta;" (vol. ii., let. 166,) and again, " Gaula in lingua Inglese dalla quale e cavata quest' Istoria vuol dir Francia," (vol. ii. let. 93.).

It also appears from various passages of the letters of B. Tasso, that as much doubt and misapprehension existed with regard to the country of the hero as concerning the original author of the romance. He says that the *refabricator* of the work from the British history thought that Gaul meant Wales, and that he had erroneously styled his hero Amadis of Gaul, " per non avere inteso quel vocabulo Gaules, il qual nella lingua Inglese vuol dir Gallia." But Gaules signifying Gallia, or France, Tasso concludes that France was the country of Amadis; he therefore resolves to call his poem Amadigi di Francia, and expresses his confidence that the reasons he has assigned will be sufficient, " a divellere questo invecchiato abuso dall opinion degli uomini." This general opinion, that Wales was the country of Amadis, was not an unnatural one, since Gaules and Gaula, in old English, was the name for Wales as well as France:—" I say Gallia and Gaul—French and Welch—soul-curer and body-curer," exclaims the host in the Merry Wives of Windsor, (act iii. scene i.) while

addressing the French doctor and the Welch parson. There are also several circumstances in the romance itself, which might have led to the mistake. Thus Amadis proceeding from Gaul to the court of the king of England, which was then held at Vindilisora (Windsor) sails to a goodly city in Great Britain, called Brestoya (Bristol,) a strange port to land at in crossing from France to England, but a very convenient harbour for one proceeding from South Wales to Windsor. On the whole, however, Tasso seems right in supposing that by Gaula the author of Amadis meant France; for we are told in the course of the work, that Perion, king of Gaul, and father of Amadis, summons to a council the bishops and lords of his kingdom, commanding them to bring the most celebrated clerks in their respective districts, and two members of the council were in consequence attended by Clerk Ungan of Picardy, and Alberto of Champagne.

Though the Spaniards do not lay any claim to the original composition of this romance, nor to its hero as their countryman, the most ancient impression of it now extant is in their language, and was printed in 1526, at Seville. This work was compiled from detached Spanish fragments, which had appeared in the time of Ferdinand and Isa-

bella. It was subsequently revised and compared with the old manuscript fragments by Garcias Ordognez de Montalvo, who at length published an amended edition in 1547, at Salamanca. From the prior edition of 1526, D'Herberay formed his translation of the four books of Amadis, dedicated to Francis I., and printed 1540. To these he added other four books, containing the exploits of the descendants of Amadis, which were drawn from Spanish originals: the family history was subsequently carried to the twenty-fourth book by translators who also wrought from Spanish originals, but sometimes added interpolations of their own; and the whole received the name of Amadis de Gaul, which was the title of all the peninsular prototypes. The first books, which relate peculiarly to the exploits of Amadis, were compressed by the Count de Tressan, in his free translation, into two volumes 12mo. His labour was entirely useless, as he has, in a great measure, changed the incidents of the romance, and hid the genuine manners and feelings of chivalry under the varnish of French sentiment. A late version by Mr Southey is greatly preferable, as the events are there accurately related, and the manners faithfully observed.

The era of the exploits of Amadis is prior to

the age of Arthur or Charlemagne, and he is the most ancient as well as the most fabulous of all heroes of chivalry. He is said in the romance to have been the illegitimate offspring of Perion, king of Gaul, and Elisena, princess of Britany. The mother, to conceal her shame, exposed the infant, soon after his birth, in a cradle, which was committed to the sea. He was picked up by a knight of Scotland, who was returning from Britany to his own country, and who reared him under the name of Child of the Sea. When twelve years of age he was sent to be educated at the court of the king of Scotland. There a mutual attachment was formed between him and Oriana, who was daughter of Lisuarte, king of England, but had been sent to Scotland on account of the commotions in her own country. After Amadis had received the honour of knighthood, he proceeded to the succour of Perion, king of Gaul, who by this time had espoused Elisena, and had become the father of another son, named Galaor. This second child had been stolen by a giant, who wished to educate him according to his own system; but Perion was consoled for the loss by the recognition of Amadis, who was discovered to be his son by means of a ring, which had been placed on his finger when he was exposed. His parents

derived the greater satisfaction from this acknowledgment, as Amadis had already proved his valour by the overthrow of the king of Ireland, who had invaded Gaul,—an exploit similar to that with which it may be recollected Tristan began his career.

It is impossible to give any account of the adventures of Amadis after his return to England, though they only divide the romance with those of his brother Galaor—the wars of extermination he carried on against giants—the assistance he afforded to Lisuarte against the usurper Barsinan and the enchanter Arcalaus—his long retirement under the name of Beltenebros to a hermitage, after receiving a cruel letter from his mistress Oriana, one of the chief points of Don Quixote's fantastic imitation—the battles he fought, after quitting this abode, against Cildadan, king of Ireland—the defeat of a hundred knights, by whom Lisuarte had been attacked; and, finally, his innumerable exploits in Germany and in Turkey, when the jealousy and suspicion of Lisuarte, excited by evil counsellors, had forced him to leave Oriana and the court of England.

Amadis returned, however, in sufficient time to rescue his beloved princess from the power of the Romans, to whose ambassadors Lisuarte had given

her up, to be espoused by the emperor's brother. Their fleet having been intercepted by Amadis, and totally defeated, Oriana was conveyed to the Firm Island by her lover. A long war was then carried on betwixt Lisuarte and Amadis, in which the former was worsted; and when weakened by two dreadful battles, he was unexpectedly attacked by an old enemy, Aravigo, who was urged on by the enchanter Arcalaus. When in this dilemma, he was saved by the generosity of Amadis, who having turned to his assistance the arms he had lately employed against him, defeated his enemies, slew Aravigo, and took Arcalaus prisoner. On account of this conduct, and a discovery that the delights of matrimony had been anticipated, Lisuarte consented to the formal union of his daughter with Amadis. Their nuptials were celebrated on the Firm Island, and Oriana terminated the wonderful enchantments of that spot, by entering the magic apartment, which could only be approached by the fairest and most faithful woman in the world.

The notion of a chamber, a tower, or island, accessible only to a certain hero or beauty, and which occurs in many of the subsequent books of Amadis, is evidently derived from oriental fiction, which, as naturally to be expected, abounds more

in the romances of the peninsula, than in those of France or England. We are told in an eastern story, that Abdalmalek, 5th caliph of the Ommiades, and one of the first who invaded Spain, arrived at a castle erected by the fairies, on one of the most remote mountains in Spain. The gate was secured, not by a lock, but by a dragon's tooth, and over it was an inscription, which imported that it was accessible to none but Abdalmalek.

But while eastern fictions have supplied some magical adventures, especially towards the conclusion of the work, the earlier and greater part of Amadis de Gaul is occupied with combats, which are generally described with much spirit, yet are tiresome by frequent repetition; and at length scarcely interest us, as we become almost certain of the success of the hero from the frequent recurrence of victory.

Though the story does not lead us, like many other romances, through the adventures of a multitude of knights, changing without method from one to another, it suspends our attention between the exploits of Amadis and those of his brother Galaor.

Amadis excels the French romances of chivalry in the delineation of character. There is much sweetness in the account of the infancy and boy-

hood of the Child of the Sea, and the early attachment betwixt him and Oriana. This princess, however, proves to be of weak intellect and peevish disposition, and is frequently disquieted with ill-founded jealousy. Amadis is an interesting character, and is well distinguished from his brother Galaor; they are equally valiant, but the elder wants the gaiety of the younger; he also remains faithfully attached to one mistress, while Galaor is constantly changing the object of his affections, a fraternal contrast which has been exhibited in most of the Spanish romances relating to the descendants of Amadis.

In the morals displayed, and in the general conduct of the incidents, these continuations are much inferior to the work which they follow, but they become, as they advance, more splendid in their decorations, and more imposing in their machinery. The Urganda of the original Amadis, as Mr Southey remarks, is a true fairy, like Morgaine le Fay, and the Lady of the Lake; but the Urganda, who, in the subsequent books of Amadis, sails about in the Green Serpent, is an enchantress of a more formidable description, and her rivals, Zirfea and Melia, are as tremendous as the Medea of classical mythology.

Of this series of fictions, the first romance is the

EXPLOITS OF ESPLANDIAN,[1] the son of Amadis, the greater part of which is the work of Montalvo, the Spanish translator of Amadis. In order to shelter himself under a popular name, the author called it the fifth book of Amadis; on which it thus became the burden and excrescence. This example was imitated by the followers of Montalvo—the history of Lisuarte formed the seventh and eighth books, and that of Amadis of Greece the ninth and tenth of Amadis de Gaul. The Spanish romancers thus proceeded from generation to generation; and, in order to give some plausibility to the title they bestowed, they kept Amadis himself alive, who thus became the perennial prop of his otherwise insupportable descendants.

None of the progeny degenerated more from the merits of the parent than his immediate successor Esplandian; and Cervantes, who tolerated Amadis de Gaul as the first and best of the kind, hath most justly decreed, "that the excellence of the father should not avail the son, but that he

[1] Quinto libro d' Amadis de Gaula, o las Sergas dell cavallero Esplandian hijo d' Amadis de Gaula.—*Seville*, 1542. *Saragossa*, 1587. Sergas is probably a corruption of the plural of the Greek word *Ergon* (opus,) corresponding to *hechos* in Spanish.

should be thrown into the court to give a beginning to the bonfire."

The part of Amadis de Gaul, however, which contains an account of the infancy of Esplandian, is one of the most beautiful portions of that romance. Oriana having given birth to a son, the fruit of her stolen interviews with Amadis, delivered the child to her confidants, that he might be conveyed to a remote part of the country for the sake of concealment. Those to whom the infant was entrusted, in order to travel more privately, struck into a forest. A lioness, which resided in this quarter, made free to carry off the child as provender for her whelps. Unfortunately for them she had a respectable hermit for a neighbour, who met and rebuked her before she reached the den with her prey. She was quite disconcerted at being thus unexpectedly caught, and at length, by her good neighbour's seasonable remonstrances, was brought to a better way of thinking, and was induced to undertake the office of nurse to the child, who was now conveyed to the hermitage. There Esplandian was accordingly suckled with much blandishment by the reformed lioness, and when she went to prowl, her place was supplied by an ewe and a she-goat. Other heroes of chivalry, it may be recollected, were

fostered in a similar manner; fictions, no doubt, suggested by the classical fable of Romulus and Remus.

As Esplandian grew up, the lioness acted as a dry nurse; she guarded him when he walked out from the hermitage, and afterwards accompanied him in the chase.

One day King Lisuarte, in the course of his field sports, entered the forest where Esplandian was bred up by the hermit and the motherly lioness, and perceived the boy leading in a leash this animal, which he loosed, when a stag was started, and hallooed her to the prey. When the game was overtaken, the lioness and two spaniels had their shares of the spoil. The king was surprised at beholding this singular group, and Esplandian being carried to the verge of the forest, where the queen had pitched her pavilion, was recognised by Oriana as her son, by means of certain characters on his breast. In the subsequent romances, the descendants of Esplandian are usually discovered by some inscription of this nature, or other personal mark, as a cross or flaming sword, an awkward alteration on the Greek romances, where children are identified by certain articles of apparel or decoration, which they wore at the time of their loss or exposure.

Esplandian was brought up at the court of King Lisuarte, and was in due time admitted into the order of knighthood. The romance, which is appropriated to his exploits, commences immediately after this inauguration. During a sleep, into which he fell soon after the ceremony, he was carried, with his squire, by means of Urganda the Unknown, to that incomprehensible machine the Ship of the great Serpent, wherein he was conveyed to the foot of a castle, the enchantments of which he was destined to terminate.

Thence, under the name of the Black Knight, (an appellation bestowed from the colour of his armour,) he sailed to the Forbidden Mountain, a strong-hold on the confines of Turkey and Greece, and which, in this romance, is the chief theatre of exploits. Esplandian took possession of it in behalf of the Greek emperor, having slain its former gigantic and heathenish proprietors. He did not, however, long occupy this fortress in quiet, as it was soon besieged by Armato, the soldan of the Turks, with a great army. But Esplandian had now additional motives to exert himself in behalf of the Greek emperor. Leonorina, the emperor's daughter, and our knight, though they had never met, had become mutually enamoured, and maintain, during the romance, an interchange of ami-

tory embassies. Armato, instead of recovering possession of the Forbidden Mountain, was defeated and made prisoner. Encouraged by this success, Esplandian carried the war into the heart of Turkey, and took the principal city. Hearing, however, that his mistress was offended at his neglect in not having come to visit her, he departed for Constantinople; and on the night of his arrival was privately conveyed into her apartment in a cedar coffer, of which he had requested her acceptance.

On his return the war was prosecuted against the Turks with new vigour. The Christians were assisted by Urganda, who, in all his adventures, had highly favoured Amadis, and extends her protection to his latest posterity. On the other hand, the infidels were supported by the enchantress Melia, the sister of Armato. That soldan having effected his escape from confinement on the back of a dragon, which had been provided by his sister, speedily raised an immense army, and besieged Constantinople. He was aided by all the eastern caliphs and soldans, and especially by an Amazonian queen, who brought, as her contingent, a flight of fifty prime griffins, well equipped, which flew over the bulwarks of the city, and committed internal devastations. The Greeks, on their part,

were assisted by Amadis de Gaul and the western potentates. After a protracted warfare, it was agreed that the contest should be settled by a double combat. Amadis and his son Esplandian were selected on the one side; the Amazonian queen and a choice soldan on the other. The latter were worsted, yet, notwithstanding the agreement, the Paynim army attacked the Christians, but was totally defeated and expelled the Greek dominions. The emperor then resigned his kingdom in favour of Esplandian, who espoused Leonorina, daughter of the abdicated monarch.

Now, after a time, Urganda by her great knowledge discovered that Amadis, Galaor, Esplandian, and all her favourite knights, were in a short time to pay the debt of nature. She therefore sent for them to the Firm Island, and informed them that the only way to escape mortality, was to remain in the dormant state into which she could throw them, till disenchanted by Lisuarte, son of Esplandian, acquiring possession of a certain magic sword, when they would all spring to life with renovated vigour.

Thus, although new heroes are always rising on the stage, the reader never gets free of the old ones. They subsist through the whole romance of

LISUARTE OF GREECE,[1]

son of Esplandian and Leonorina, who was destined to recall them to their former inquietude. His exploits occupy the 7th and 8th books of Amadis, which are said to have been written by Juan Diaz, bachelor of canon law. Perion, who was son of Amadis de Gaul and Oriana, and born after their legal union, is the second character in this romance, which commences with the account of a voyage undertaken by Perion, from England to Ireland, in order to be dubbed a knight by the king of the latter country. On his way he is separated from his followers by a lady cruising in a boat managed by four apes, who insist that he should accompany their mistress, for the fulfilment of a great emprise. His attendants proceed to Constantinople, where they report his adventure, and Lisuarte, in consequence, sets out in quest of his kinsman Perion. This prince had meanwhile arrived in Trebizond, and fallen in love with one

[1] Chronica de los famosos esforcados cavalleros Lisuarte de Grecia, hijo d' Esplandian; y de Perion de Gaul, hijo d' Amadis de Gaula.—*Seville*, 1525, *folio*.

of the emperor's daughters; he had not, however, leisure to prosecute his suit, as She of the Apes hurries him away to accomplish the enterprise he had undertaken.

Soon after his departure, Lisuarte also arrived in Trebizond, and fell in love with Onoloria, the emperor's other daughter: but while enjoying himself in the society of his mistress, a lady of gigantic stature came to court, and asked from Lisuarte a gift. This, as usual, was promised without any inquiries as to its nature, and it proved to be the attendance of Lisuarte for a twelvemonth, whereever she chose to demand. Now this lady was in the interest of the pagans, and had fallen on this device to remove Lisuarte, who was the chief support of the Grecian throne. The emperor of Trebizond was informed of her stratagem soon after the departure of Lisuarte, by a letter which was closed with sixty-seven seals, and which also announced that Constantinople was about to be besieged by Armato, the Turkish soldan, who had placed himself at the head of a league of sixty-seven princes,—a coalition ingeniously denoted by the number of seals.

Lisuarte, meanwhile, was delivered in charge to the king of the Giants' Isle, whose daughter Gradaffile fell in love with the prisoner, procured his

escape, and followed him to Constantinople. There Lisuarte performed many feats of valour in combating the pagan enemies by whom the city was now besieged, and was soon assisted in the defence by Perion, who arrived in Greece after having accomplished the enterprise in which he had been so long engaged. At length Lisuarte having obtained possession of the fatal sword, Amadis de Gaul, Esplandian, and the Grecian princes burst the enchantment into which they had been lulled by Urganda, in the Firm Island. The city being relieved by the return of these potent and refreshed auxiliaries, Lisuarte set out for Trebizond, but, on his way thither, met with various adventures which detained him. Perion arrived before him, but left Trebizond for a time, at the request of the duchess of Austria, whom he restored to her dominions, and received from her the highest reward she could bestow. In this romance Lisuarte is the Amadis, or constant lover, Perion, the Galaor, or general lover. Perion, however, differs from his prototype in this, that Galaor was altogether undistinguishing in his amours, and had no preference for any mistress; whereas Perion, though guilty of occasional infidelities, still retains the first place in his affections for the princess of Trebizond.

At length Perion and Lisuarte meet at the pa-

lace of their mistresses, who, as usual, admit their lovers to the privileges, before they have possessed the characters, of husbands. It afterwards occurred to them to send ambassadors to Esplandian and Amadis de Gaul, to talk of their nuptials: but, meanwhile, the emperor of Trebizond and Perion were carried off by pagan wiles, during a hunting match; and Lisuarte having gone in quest of them, came to the spot where they were detained, and was imprisoned in the same confinement.

While her lover Lisuarte thus remained in durance, the princess of Trebizond gave birth to a son, afterwards known by the name of

AMADIS OF GREECE,[1]

whose adventures, blended with those of his sempiternal ancestry, form the 9th book of the family history, which is feigned, in the commencement of the 2d part, to have been imitated in Latin from the Greek, and thence translated into the Romance language: "Sacada de Griego in Latin, y de Latin en romance, segun lo escrivio el gran sabio Alquife en las magicas."

[1] Amadis de Grecia hijo de Don Lisuarte. Burgos, 1535.

The imprudent anticipation of Onoloria rendered concealment necessary, and, during the baptism of her infant, which was performed at a retired fountain, he was carried off by corsairs, and sold by them to the Moorish king of Saba (Sheva). It has been remarked, that the lineage of Amadis generally had from infancy some striking personal peculiarity, which, in the untoward circumstances of their birth and childhood, was essential to a future acknowledgment by their parents. Amadis of Greece was distinguishable by the representation of a sword on his breast. Hence, when, at the age of fourteen, he obtained some order of chivalry from the king of Saba, he assumed the name of the Knight of the Flaming Sword. A black courtier being jealous of the favour which He of the Flaming Sword enjoyed with the king, accused him to his master of a criminal intrigue with the queen. Amadis was obliged privately to escape from the wrath of the incensed monarch, and thus at an early age enters on the career of adventure.

The exploits in this romance commence, as they did in that of Esplandian, at the Forbidden Mountain. Amadis, who was yet an obdurate heathen, defeated and expelled the Christian possessors who held it for the Greeks, and afterwards

defended it in single combat against the Emperor Esplandian himself, who came in person to recover that important citadel. After this he fell in with the king of Sicily; their acquaintance commenced with a combat, but Amadis subsequently aided him in various enterprises, to which he was stimulated by the passion he had conceived for this monarch's daughter.

In the course of his navigation to Sicily, Amadis arrived at an island where he disenchanted the emperor of Trebizond, Lisuarte, Perion, and Gradaffile. These princes, and their female companion Gradaffile, as was mentioned in the end of the last romance, had been carried off by pagan stratagems, and were lying in the dormant state into which they had been lulled by the sorcery of a pagan princess, in the same manner, though with different views, that their ancestors had been put to rest by Urganda. When these heroes were completely roused, Amadis de Gaul having set out in quest of adventures, met with the queen of Saba, who was scouring the seas in search of a champion to defend her against the false charge of conjugal infidelity. Amadis espoused her quarrel, and having arrived in Saba, overthrew her accuser, and established to the satisfaction of the king the in-

nocence of his wife, and his *Eleve* of the Flaming Sword.

After the account of this exploit, a considerable portion of the romance is occupied with the unremitting pursuit, by Amadis of Greece, of a knight whom he erroneously imagined to be in love with the princess of Sicily, because he overheard him reciting amorous verses. He long pursued him with unabating animosity, and met with many adventures during his chase; but was at length undeceived at a personal interview, at which he seems to have learned, for the first time, that there could be other subjects of amatory verses besides the princess of Sicily.

While Amadis was thus occupied, his father Lisuarte had returned to Trebizond, and had formally requested the hand of Onoloria. Unfortunately for his pretensions, Zairo, sultan of Babylon, had become enamoured of this princess in a dream, and had arrived at Trebizond, accompanied by his sister Abra, to demand her in marriage. His propositions were much relished by the emperor, but, being of course opposed by Lisuarte, the sultan resorted to warlike measures to obtain possession of Onoloria; he accordingly besieged Trebizond, but the champions he se-

lected to decide his pretensions were defeated by Gradaffile, who appeared in the disguise of a knight. The sultan afterwards forcibly carried off the object of his passion, but his fleet was encountered by Amadis de Gaul, who was sailing to the relief of Trebizond. Onoloria was rescued, and the sultan himself was slain.

Abra, his sister, succeeded to the throne of Babylon. This princess, when she accompanied her brother to Trebizond, had become enamoured of Lisuarte: her suit had been rejected, and the pangs of ill-requited affection, added to the desire of avenging the death of her brother, induced her to raise up knights in all parts of the world to attempt the destruction of Lisuarte. One of her damsels, while on this quest, met with Amadis of Greece, and made him promise to grant her mistress the head of Lisuarte as a gift. Hence, on the arrival of Amadis at Trebizond, there was a dreadful combat between the father and son, which must have terminated fatally to one or other, had it not been broken off by the appearance of Urganda, who now revealed that Amadis was the offspring of Lisuarte.

This, however, was but an incidental exploit on the part of Amadis; his attention had lately been engrossed by objects different from those by which

it had been formerly absorbed. Niquea, the daughter of an eastern soldan, had fallen in love with Amadis by report, and had already despatched conciliatory messages, and sent a gift of her portrait by a favourite dwarf. Like the princess in the Persian Tales, Niquea was of such resplendent beauty, that all who beheld her died, or at least were deprived of reason. She was in consequence shut up by her father in an almost inaccessible tower, to which her family alone had admittance; and afterwards, to preserve her from the passion of her brother Anastarax, this prince was enclosed by the magician Zirfea in a magic palace, surrounded by impassable flames. The view of the portrait of this beauty overcame the fidelity which Amadis had hitherto preserved to the princess of Sicily. In order to obtain access to his new mistress, Amadis, soon after the period of his late combat with Lisuarte, so arranged matters that he was sold, in the disguise of a female slave, to her father the soldan; he thus obtained admittance to his daughter, and, after a promise of marriage, was received by her in the character of a husband.

Meanwhile, Abra being disappointed in the issue of the combat between Amadis and Lisuarte, assembled a great army, and led it against Trebizond. Her forces were totally defeated, but Ono-

loria dying about this time, Lisuarte, at the persuasion of Gradaffile, finally agreed to espouse the Babylonian queen.

The situation of Niquea now requiring retirement from a father's observation, she eloped with Amadis, and soon after arrived with him at Trebizond, where she was solemnly espoused, and gave birth to a son, named Florisel de Niquea.

That part of the family history which relates particularly to the exploits of Amadis of Greece, concludes, like the romance of Esplandian, with the enchantment of all the Greek heroes and princesses by Zirfea, in the Tower of the Universe, in order that they might evade the period appointed for their decease. There every thing that passed in the universe was magically exhibited; a display which this assembly, while seated in easy chairs, was destined to contemplate at leisure for the ensuing century.

This romance of Amadis of Greece, and all its successors, have suffered the severest censure from Cervantes. "The next, said the barber, is Amadis of Greece, yea, and all these on this side are of the lineage of Amadis. Then into the yard with them all, quoth the priest, for rather than not burn the queen Pintiquinestra, and the shepherd Darinel, with his eclogues, and the devilish intri-

cate discourses of its author, I would burn the father who begot me, did I meet him in the garb of a knight errant." It is in the 10th book of Amadis de Gaul, which is feigned to have been written by Cirfea, queen of the Argives, and which chiefly contains the adventures of

FLORISEL DE NIQUEA,[1]

son of Amadis of Greece and Niquea, that the character of Darinel, which seems so strongly to have excited the rage of Cervantes, is exhibited. This shepherd is a new character in romance, being an amorous pastoral buffoon, who is in love with Sylvia, the heroine of the work. Sylvia was the fruit of one of the stolen interviews of Lisuarte and Onoloria; she of course was removed from her parents in her infancy, and had been educated in the vicinity of Alexandria. As she grew up she was beloved by Darinel, a neighbouring swain; but as the fair one exercised unusual rigour towards her lover, he resolved to expose himself to perish on the top of the highest mountain in the

[1] El deceno libro de Amadis, que es el cronica de Don Florisel de Niquea, hijo de Amadis de Grecia.—*Valladolid*, 1532.

empire of Babylon. In this region he met with Florisel, who was at that time residing at the Babylonish court. To this prince, Darinel gave such an animated description of the beauty of Sylvia, that he disguised himself as a shepherd, and prevailed on Darinel to conduct him to her abode. Sylvia was as unrelenting to the pretended as she had been to the real shepherd; but, on hearing from Florisel an account of the enchantment of Anastarax, who was still enclosed in his fiery palace, she became enamoured of that prince, and persuaded Florisel, and also Darinel, (who had for a time relinquished his scheme of exposure on the top of the highest mountain of Babylon,) to set out with her to attempt his deliverance. They departed together, but having arrived at the spot, they understood that this adventure was reserved for Alastraxare, an Amazon, who was the fruit of an amour between the queen of Caucasus and Amadis of Greece. The achievements of Alastraxare occupy a considerable part of the romance; and in their search for this heroine, the pastoral party met with many adventures, of which the chief is that of Florisel with Arlanda, princess of Thrace, who had fallen in love with him by report, followed him in his travels, and, finally, con-

trived to gratify her passion, by coming to him in the dusk, disguised in the clothes of Sylvia.

At length Sylvia was separated from Florisel and Darinel during a tempest, and returned to the flaming prison, or hell, as it is called, of Anastarax. There she met Alastraxare, and their united efforts accomplished the disenchantment. Nearly at the same time there arrived at this spot a number of the Greek princes, who were travelling to the Tower of the Universe, to attempt the deliverance of their kindred. Sylvia was then discovered to be the daughter of Lisuarte, and was soon after united to her beloved Anastarax.

Meanwhile Florisel and Darinel had been driven to the coast of Apolonia, where Florisel, forgetting Sylvia, became enamoured of Helena, princess of that country, but was soon forced to leave his new mistress, and, during his absence, accomplished the deliverance of his kindred; an adventure, the completion of which had all along been reserved for him.

On his way back to Apolonia he landed at Colchos, where he met with Alastraxare. Falanges, a Greek knight, and the constant companion of Florisel in his expeditions, fell in love with and finally espoused this Amazon. Florisel, on his ar-

rival in Apolonia, found his mistress, Helena, on the eve of a marriage with the prince of Gaul, an infidelity to which she had been constrained by her father; but Florisel interrupted the marriage ceremony, by carrying off the bride. This rape of the second Helen, as she is termed, produced a great war. The forces of all the potentates of the west of Europe laid siege to Constantinople, and defeated the Greek army, chiefly by aid of the Russians. The savage monarch of that people, however, offended that his assistance had not been solicited by either party, was anxious for the destruction of both. Accordingly the Greeks having made an attempt to retrieve matters, the Russians unexpectedly fell on their former allies, and thus delivered Constantinople from the western invasion, and secured Florisel in the possession of Helena.

Here the romance might have received termination, and the reader repose, but there yet remain two-thirds of the family history, and the adventures of a long series of heroes, who of course must be ushered in by an account of the previous amours of their ancestors. Amadis of Greece, in pursuing the treacherous Russians, to whom his country had been so much indebted, and who set sail immediately after their late notable exploit,

was driven on a desert island, where he resolved to stay and do penance, on account of his infidelity to the princess of Sicily. Here he remained till that princess accidentally landed on the island, and, after the proper expostulations, persuaded him to return to his wife Niquea. Meanwhile the Greek knights, particularly Florisel and Falanges, had set out in quest of Amadis, and had arrived at the isle of Guinday. Sidonia, the queen of this country, proposed to marry Falanges; but, as he was scrupulous in maintaining his fidelity to Alastraxare, Florisel agreed to substitute himself in the place of his friend, and accordingly espoused her majesty under the feigned name of Moraizel. He soon after abandoned his bride, but the effect of this short intercourse was the birth of Diana, the most beautiful of all the princesses of romance, and heroine of the eleventh and twelfth books of this enormous history, which chiefly contain the adventures of

AGESILAN OF COLCHOS,

son of Falanges and Alastraxare. A representation of the figure of the incomparable Diana having been rashly exhibited at Athens, where Age-

silan was prosecuting his studies, he was inspired with such an irresistible passion, that he repaired, in the disguise of a female minstrel, to the court of Queen Sidonia, the mother of his mistress, and was presented to her daughter as an amusing companion. Here he occasionally entertained the court ladies by the exercise of his musical and poetical talents, but at other times distinguished himself as an amazon, in combating the knights, who on various pretexts came to molest Sidonia. The circumstance of a lover residing with his mistress, and unknown to her, in disguise of a female, is frequent in subsequent romances, as in the Arcadia and Argenis, and its origin must be looked for in the story of the concealment of Achilles.

Agesilan at length having sufficiently signalized himself by his exploits, appeared in his real character, and undertook to bring Sidonia the head of Florisel, against whom, since he had married and abandoned her, under the name of Moraizel, she had conceived the most bitter resentment. In prosecution of this scheme, Agesilan repaired to Constantinople, and defied Florisel to mortal fight. It was arranged that this combat should take place in the dominions of Sidonia, but it was there discovered, on the arrival of the champions, that Florisel might be turned to better ac-

count by employing him in defence of the island, which had been recently invaded by the Russians. Having got rid of these enemies, Agesilan and Diana were affianced, and the general joy was increased by the arrival of the elder and younger Amadis. The Greek princes then set sail for Constantinople, where it was intended that the nuptials of Agesilan and Diana should be solemnized. A tempest having arisen during the voyage, Agesilan and Diana were separated from the rest of their kindred, and thrown together on a desert rock, where they would have perished, had not a knight mounted on a griffin picked them up, and conveyed them to his residence in the Green Isle, one of the Canaries. Next morning their preserver having become enchanted with the beauty of Diana, privately carried her off to a remote part of the island, and was proceeding to give her the most lively demonstrations of attachment, when she was rescued by corsairs who had accidentally landed, and was conveyed on board their vessel. Agesilan having missed their host, and being also unable to find Diana, set out in quest of her on the griffin. Having in vain surveyed the island from the back of this winged monster, he traversed many other atmospheres, and at length descended in the country of the Garamantes. The king of

this region, on account of his pride, had been struck blind, and had been sentenced to have the food prepared for him devoured by a nauseous dragon, which was now driven off by Agesilan. This story corresponds with that in the Orlando Furioso (c. 33. st. 102, &c.), of Senapus, king of Ethiopia, who, on account of his overweening pride, had been deprived of sight, and had his food daily polluted by harpies, till relieved by Astolpho, who descended as from heaven on a winged steed. Besides these circumstances of resemblance, the nations, both in the poem and romance, are of the Christian faith, both monarchs reside in the most sumptuous palaces, and both deliverers are mistaken for deities on their descent. The origin of these, as of most other stories of the same sort, is classical, and is derived from the story of Phineus and the Harpies in the Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius:—

There on the margin of the beating flood,
The mournful mansions of sad Phineus stood:
Taught by the wise Apollo to descry
Unborn events of dark futurity,
Vain of his science, the presumptuous seer
Deigned not Jove's awful secrets to revere;
Hence Jove, indignant, gave him length of days,
But quenched in endless night his visual rays;

Nor would the vengeful god indulge his taste
With the sweet blessings of a pure repast,
Though (for they learned his fate,) the country round
Their prophet's board with every dainty crowned.
For, lo! descending sudden from the sky,
Round the piled banquet shrieking harpies fly,
Whose beaks rapacious, and whose talons, tear
Quick from his famished lips the untasted fare.
Fawkes Ap. Rhodius, b. 2.

The Argonauts touch at the mansion of Phineus on their voyage to Colchos, and two of their number, the winged children of Boreas, deliver the prophet from this disturbance.

After having re-installed the king of the Garamantes in the pleasures of a comfortable meal, Agesilan set out on the farther quest of Diana, and arrived at the Desolate Isle. The god Tervagant had fallen in love with the queen of this country; but, being baulked in his amour, had let loose a band of destructive hobgoblins, who ravaged the land. An oracle of the god declared, that Tervagant would only be appeased, if the inhabitants daily exposed on the sea-shore a fresh beauty, till such time as he found one he liked as well as the queen. As the fair offering to the fastidious god was every day devoured by a sea-monster, the island was now nearly depopulated, and corsairs were employed to ravage other countries, in quest

of victims. Diana had fallen into the hands of this crew, and, on her arrival, was bound to the rock. That very day Agesilan descended on his griffin, and offered his services against the sea-monster. On proceeding to the place of combat, the discovery of the situation of his mistress invigorated his exertions. Having slain the monster after a dreadful combat, he placed his beloved Diana on his hippogriff, and skimmed with her towards Constantinople.

It may be remembered, that in the Orlando Furioso (c. 8), Proteus, being offended at the bad treatment the princess of Eubuda had received, in consequence of an affair of gallantry in which she had engaged with him, commissioned herds of marine monsters to depopulate the country, and would only be appeased by a daily offering of a damsel, to glut an ork which was stationed on the shore, in readiness to receive her. Angelica was brought to this country by seamen, who scoured the main for victims, and was bound to the fatal rock when delivered by Ruggiero, who arrived on his winged courser. This, like the story of the blind king and the dragon, is of classical origin, and has been doubtless suggested by the fiction of Perseus and Andromeda.

On his flight to Constantinople, Agesilan spied beneath him the ship of Amadis, from which he had been originally separated, and which was still on its voyage. He dextrously alighted on this vessel, and proceeded with the rest of his kindred to the Grecian capital, where his nuptials were solemnized with Diana.

Agesilan of Colchos is the faithful lover of this part of the family chronicle. Rogel of Greece, whose adventures occupy a considerable part of the romance, is the Galaor, or general lover. He was the son of Florisel and Helena, and is, I think, by far the most rakish of his kindred. It is true he is specially attached to Leonida, a Greek princess, whom he finally marries; but, at the solicitation of any damsel, he sets out to the relief of her mistress: he usually begins the adventure by an intrigue with the ambassadress, and concludes by an amour with the lady he had served.

The reader, I presume, does not wish any farther to pursue the involved genealogy of the romantic issue of Amadis, and a few words will bring us to the latest posterity.

Many of the chief heroes of the family of Amadis possess a sentimental and platonic female friend, like the Gradaffile of Lisuarte. Finistea acted in

this capacity to Amadis of Greece, and attended him in his long quest of his empress Niquea, who had been carried off while on her way to visit her father. In the course of their peregrinations, Amadis and Finistea came to a desert island, where, having partaken of a certain fruit, they totally divested themselves of their platonic habits, and a son was in consequence produced, who, from the place of his birth, was called

SILVIO DE LA SELVA.[1]

This prince first distinguished himself at the siege of Constantinople by the Russians, whose king had lately transmitted, by twelve dwarfs, a defiance to the Grecian princes, in which he mentioned that he had entered into a confederacy with a hundred and sixty eastern monarchs, to burn all the habitations of the Greeks, that they might be re-built on an improved plan by his subjects the Russians. A long account is given of the war, which terminated successfully for the besieged; but they are hardly freed from their Russian foes, when the whole bevy of Greek empresses and princesses

[1] Hechos de Silvio de la Selva, hijo de Amadis de Grecia.

are carried off by one fell stroke of necromancy. All the knights and heroes set out in search of them, and meet with the accustomed adventures, in which Silvio de la Selva particularly distinguishes himself. After the princesses are brought back to their own habitations, it is found that, during their absence, many have given birth to children. Spheramond, son of Rogel of Greece, and Amadis of Astre, son of Agesilan, are of the number. When Spheramond and Amadis grow up, they are both sent to Parthia, for it was destined they should be there admitted into the order of chivalry. Here they fall in love with two Parthian princesses, Rosaliana and Richarda, whom they espouse after they have gone through the requisite number of adventures. Among others, they had been present at a great battle between the Christians and Pagans, who, as usual, had besieged Constantinople. In this combat the king of the Island of Terror was slain on the side of the paynims. His widow resolves to be avenged, and accomplishes her purpose by carrying away the young prince Saphiraman, son of Spheramon and the princess Richarda, as also Hercules d'Astre, son of Amadis d'Astre and Rosaliana. These two princes are shut up in an impregnable tower ; and the adventures of different knights who attempt

their deliverance are related at great length. This is finally effected by Fulgarine, son of Rogel of Greece; and the family history concludes with the exploits of these princes after they have received their freedom; but what relates to them is chiefly of French invention.

A Spanish romance concerning Flores of Greece, surnamed Knight of the Swan, second son of the Emperor Esplandian, a work also translated by D'Herberay, may be associated to the history of Amadis. The adventures of the Knight of the Sun[1] and his brother Rosiclair, may also be considered as belonging to the same series of romance, since Perion, the parent of Amadis de Gaul, was descended from Trebatius, father to the Knight of the Sun. Nicolas Antonio, in one part of his Bibliotheca Hispaniæ, says, that the first two books of this romance were written by Diego Ortunes, and elsewhere that they were from the pen of Pedro de la Sierra. A third part was composed by Marcos Martinez, and a fourth by Feliciano de Selva: Nevertheless the work is not finished, and the knights are left under enchantment. Cervantes says it contains something of the inventions of

[1] Espejo de principes e cavalleros, o Cavallero del Febo.—*Saragessa*, 1580, 2 *vol. folio.*

the Italian poet Boiardo; but I imagine the Orlando Innamorato was prior to the Spanish work. The whole romance has been translated into English, under the title of the Mirrour of Knighthood, and into French literally from the Spanish, in eight volumes. It has also been compressed into two by the Marquis de Paulmy, who has used it as a frame, in which he has enclosed what he considered the finest delineations of the whole family picture. The romantic story of the issue of Amadis has been wound up in the Roman des Romans, a work originally French, and written by Duverdier.

The fables relating to Amadis de Gaul, and his lineage, often supplied with materials the poets and dramatists of the neighbouring countries. Both the Amadigi and Floridante of Bernardo Tasso are formed on the first work of the series, and innumerable French and Italian dramas have been founded on incidents which occur in Amadis of Greece and Agesilan of Colchos. The romances of the peninsula, however, in general, had less influence on the early literature of this country than either the French romances, or Italian novels. This Mr Southey attributes to the wretched manner in which the early translations of them were execu-

ted. He has mentioned, however, that in Amadis of Greece may be found the original of the Zelmane of Sidney's Arcadia, the Florizel of Shakspeare's Winter's Tale, and Masque of Cupid in the Faery Queene.

Having now discussed the history of Amadis and his descendants, we come to the second family chronicle, carried on in the romances of the peninsula. Of this new series, the first romance, at least considered in relation to the order of events, is

PALMERIN DE OLIVA.[1]

There is no dispute concerning the language in which this work was originally written, as there is with regard to so many of the other tales of chivalry belonging to this third class of romances. It first appeared in Spanish, and was printed at Seville, 1525, in folio. A second impression, also in Spanish, was published at Venice in 1526, and is dedicated, in a prologue, to Cæsar Triulsci, who was then learning that language. The work

[1] Libro del famoso Cavallero Palmerin de Oliva, y de sus grandes Hechos.

afterwards appeared in 1533, 12mo., also at Venice, corrected by the Spaniard Juan Matheo da Villa, and addressed to the Senor Juan de Nores Conde de Tripoli, *Embarador dell Universidad de Chipro*, who is told that it is dedicated to him that, as he had a taste for languages, he might learn the Spanish, and that this tongue might be ennobled by his acquiring it. In 1546, there was published at Paris, in folio, a French version, of which Jean Maugin, called Le petit Angevin, is announced as the author. This production professes to be revised and amended from a former French translation, which is by an uncertain hand, and which, as is acknowledged in the preface, has only drawn the *matiere principale* from the Spanish. Accordingly, Maugin, who wrought on it, has enlarged in some places on the original, and abridged in others; the mode of warfare too has been altered, and the love intrigues have been Frenchified and modernized. This edition is adorned with cuts, which might suit any Spanish romance of chivalry, and are in fact adopted in the French edition of Amadis of Greece; they represent a lady in child-bed—a young man receiving the order of knighthood—an equestrian combat—a city scaled—ships in a storm—an interview between a lady and knight. The romance of Pal-

merin de Oliva was also translated into English by Anthony Munday, and published in the year 1588, 4to., in black letter.

Like many other heroes of Spanish romances, the knight who gives name to this work, was of illegitimate birth. Reymicio, the eighth emperor of Constantinople from Constantine, had a daughter named Griana, whom he destined as the wife of Tarisius, son to the king of Hungary, and nephew to the empress. The princess Griana, however, preferred Florendos of Macedon, with whom she had an interview one night in an orchard, of which the consequence was the production of the hero of this romance. Griana, by pretending sickness, concealed her pregnancy; and on the birth of the child she entrusted him to one of her confidants to be exposed. The infant was discovered by a peasant in the neighbourhood, who carried him to his cottage, brought him up as his son, and bestowed on him the name of Palmerin d'Oliva, from his being found on a hill which was covered with olives and palms. Palmerin was for a time contented with his humble destiny, but when he grew up and discovered that he was not the son of his reputed father, he longed to signalize himself by feats of arms.

One day, while in a forest, Palmerin had an op-

portunity of delivering from the jaws of a lioness a merchant who was returning to his own country from Constantinople. Our hero was taken to the city of Hermide by the person he had preserved, and there furnished with arms and a horse. Thus equipped, he proceeded to the court of Macedon to receive the order of knighthood from Florendos, who was son to the king of that country, and (though this was unknown to both parties) the father of Palmerin.

After obtaining the honour he required, the first exploit of our young hero was destroying a serpent that guarded a fountain, of which the waters were essential to the recovery of the health of Primaleon, king of Macedon. While engaged in this adventure, he received the privilege of being proof against enchantment from certain fairies who resorted to this fountain, and had a pique at the serpent.

The fame of this exploit of Palmerin being spread abroad, many neighbouring princes applied to him for assistance. In all the enterprises undertaken at their request, Palmerin was eminently successful. At length, extending his succour to more distant quarters, he delivered the emperor of Germany from the knights by whom he was besieged in the town of Gand (Ghent). Here Pal-

merin fell in love with the emperor's daughter, Polinarda, the heroine of the romance, and who, before this time, like the mistress of Artus de la Bretagne, had appeared to her lover in a dream. Having distinguished himself at a tournament in Germany, Palmerin proceeded to one which had been proclaimed in France by the prince of that country, for the purpose of driving into his opponents a due sense of the peerless beauty of his mistress, the duchess of Burgundy : but Palmerin, of course, established the superior excellence of the charms of Polinarda. After his return to Germany, this princess still continued in the retirement in which she lived at the time of his departure, but at length, by the intervention of his dwarf Urgando, he was admitted to her embraces.

Now about this time messengers arrived at court from the king of Norway, to implore assistance for their master in a war in which he was unfortunately engaged with the king of England. The emperor agreed to send an army to his relief; but Trineus, the emperor's son, being enamoured of Agriola, daughter of the English monarch, privately departed with Palmerin, and arrived in Britain with the view of aiding the father of his mistress. England now becomes the chief theatre of adventures, which at length terminate with the departure of

Palmerin and Trineus, who eloped with Agriola, the king's daughter. They all set sail in the same vessel, and during their voyage experienced a storm of some days' continuance. When it ceased, they found they were somewhat out of their reckoning, for instead of having reached the north of Germany, as intended, they had made the coast of the Morea. During the calm, by which the tempest was followed, Palmerin landed at the adjacent island of Calpa, for the purpose of hawking, a diversion which, next to the pleasures of the chase, seems to have been the chief amusement of persons of rank, and which continued to be so till the improvement in fire-arms. In the absence of Palmerin, the ship in which he had left his friends was taken by two Turkish galleys. The princess Agriola was presented by her captors to the Grand Turk; but Trineus having been set ashore on an island, which is the counterpart of that of Circe, was converted into a lap-dog.

Palmerin, meanwhile, was discovered in the island of Calpa by Archidiana, daughter of the sultan of Babylon. This lady carried him with her, and took him into her service, as did also her cousin Ardemira, who then resided at the Babylonish court. Palmerin, however, maintained his fidelity to Polinarda, and resisted the importunate solici-

tations of these princesses. The disappointment had so powerful an effect on Ardemira, that she burst a blood-vessel and expired. Amaran, son of the king of Phrygia, to whom she had been affianced, came, on hearing of her demise, to the court of Babylon, charged the princess Archidiana with her death, and offered to maintain his accusation by an appeal to arms. Palmerin espoused her quarrel, killed Amaran in single combat, and, in consequence, became a great favourite of the soldan, whom he assisted in carrying on a prosperous war against the lineage of Amaran. The soldan, elated with this success, fitted out an expedition against Constantinople, which Palmerin was ordered to accompany. That knight, however, seized the opportunity of a tempest, which arose during the voyage, to separate from the Asiatic fleet, and forced the seamen of his own vessel to steer for a port in Germany. Having landed, he immediately proceeded to the capital of the emperor, where he passed some time with Polinarda. After remaining fifteen days, he set out in quest of Trineus; and having arrived at Buda, he learned that Florendos, prince of Macedon, had lately slain Tarisius, who, it will be recollected, was his rival in the affections of Griana, princess of

Constantinople, and had been united to her in marriage by compulsion of her father. Florendos, having been taken captive by the family of Tarisius, had been sent to Constantinople, where he was condemned to the flames along with Griana, who was suspected as his accomplice. Palmerin instantly repaired to Constantinople; maintained their innocence; defeated their accusers, the nephews of Tarisius; and thus, though unknown to himself, preserved the lives of his parents. While confined to bed, in consequence of the wounds he had received in their vindication, he was visited by Griana, who discovered, from a mark on his face, and from his mentioning the place where he had been exposed, that he was indeed her child. He was then joyfully received by the emperor, and acknowledged as his successor; his own son and grandson having been slain in the battle with the Assyrians, who, after their separation from Palmerin, had landed in Greece, but had been totally defeated.

After these events Palmerin continued his quest of Trineus, but in sailing over the Mediterranean he was taken captive by the Turkish galleys, and conducted to the palace of the Grand Turk. There he was instrumental in liberating the princess

Agriola from the power of that monarch. He afterwards arrived at the court of a princess, with whom Trineus at that time resided in quality of her dog, having been lately presented to her by the enchantress, by whom he was originally transformed. Palmerin agreed to accompany this princess on a visit which she paid to Mussabelin, a Persian magician, in expectation of being cured of a distemper in her nose. The necromancer informed her, at the first consultation, that this cure could only be effected by the flowers of a tree which grew in the castle of the Ten Steps, an edifice which was guarded by enchantment. This adventure was undertaken and achieved by Palmerin, who gained the flowers of the tree, and an enchanted bird, which was destined, in due season, to announce to him, by an unearthly shriek, the approaching termination of his existence. He also put an end to the spells of the castle, by which means Trineus, who, in his canine capacity, had accompanied his friend and owner, was restored to his original form.

This exploit is followed by a long series of adventures, bearing, however, a strong resemblance to those already related; new combats, new enchantments, and new soldans with inflammable daughters. Palmerin and Trineus at length re-

turned to Europe, and the latter was soon after married to Agriola. At the same time Palmerin espoused Polinarda, and on the death of his grandsire Reymucio ascended the throne of Constantinople.

It has been suspected, from what has been said in some Latin verses at the end of Palmerin d'Oliva, that this romance was written by a woman: and if so, it gives us no very favourable impression of her morals. Nor does she atone for this defect by genius or felicity of invention. M. de Paulmy, indeed, prefers Palmerin d'Oliva to all the romances of the family history of the Palmerins, and thinks it as superior to them as Amadis de Gaul to its continuations. But more weight is to be given to the opinion of the author of Don Quixote, and even from the abstract that has been presented, the reader will, I think, be satisfied of the justness of the sentence by which Cervantes condemned it to the flames.—"Then opening another volume he found it to be Palmerin d'Oliva. Ha! have I found you, cried the curate; here, take this Oliva, let it be hewn in pieces and burnt, and the ashes scattered in the air."

The next romance in the series of the Palmerin histories is that of

PRIMALEON,[1]

son of Palmerin d'Oliva and Polinarda, which was written originally in Castilian, and bears to be translated from the Greek by Francisco Delicado. It was first printed in 1516; afterwards at Seville in 1524; at Venice in 1534; Bilboa, 1585; and Lisbon, 1598. An Italian translation was published at Venice in 1559, and a French one at Lyons in 1572. Anthony Munday translated into English, first, that part of the romance which relates to the exploits of Polendos, which was dedicated, in some Latin verses, to Sir Francis Drake, and published in 1589: He afterwards continued his labours, and produced the complete version of the romance, printed in 1595 and 1619.

Near the commencement of this work there are related the adventures of Polendos, which form the most interesting part of the romance of Primaleon. The first exploit of this hero was not brilliant.

[1] Libro que trata de los valerosos Hechos en armas de Primaleon hijo del Emperador Palmerin, y de su hermano Polendos, y de Don Duardos Principe de Inglaterra, y de ostros preciados Cavalleros de la Corte del Emperador Palmerin.

While he yet resided in the court of his mother, the queen of Tharsus, returning one day from the chase, he perceived a little old woman sitting on the steps of the palace, and, on account of some imaginary offence, kicked her to the foot of the stair-case. The old lady, when she had reached the bottom, muttered that it was not so his father Palmerin d'Oliva succoured the unfortunate. Polendos thus learned the secret of his birth, for, in fact, he was the son of Palmerin, whose fidelity to Polinarda had been, on one occasion, overcome by an intoxicating beverage he had received from the queen of Tharsus. The prince now burned to signalize himself by more splendid actions than the one he had just committed. Accordingly, he departed for Constantinople to make himself known to his father, and performed the usual exploits on the way. He did not, however, remain long at that city, but set out to rescue the princess Francelina, of whom he had become enamoured, from the hands of a giant and dwarf, by whose power she was confined in an enchanted castle.

Polendos returned to Constantinople during a great tournament, which was held to celebrate the nuptials of one of the emperor's daughters. On this occasion, Primaleon, being stimulated to the desire of glory by the exploits of his half brother

Polendos, was admitted into the order of chivalry, and greatly distinguished himself. The remainder of the romance is occupied with his adventures, and those of Duardos (Edward) of England. A duchess of Ormedes, incensed at Palmerin d'Oliva because he had slain her son, had declared she would only grant her daughter, the beautiful Gridoina, in marriage to the knight who should bring her the head of Primaleon. This raised up many enemies to that young hero, and, as he invariably slew the lovers of Gridoina, he became the object of her deepest detestation. The lady lived shut up in a remote castle, where Primaleon accidentally arrived one evening, and being unknown, he completely possessed himself of her affections before his departure.

The author of Primaleon designed

PLATIR,[1]

the son of Primaleon and Gridoina, to succeed his father in chivalry, and a romance, of which he is the hero, was accordingly written to continue the

[1] Chronica del muy valente y esforzado Cavallero Platir hijo del Emperador Primaleon.

series, which was printed at Valladolid in 1533. This work is one of those tales of chivalry condemned to the flames by Cervantes. "Here is the noble Don Platir, cried the barber. It is an old book, replied the curate, and I can think of nothing in him that deserves a grain of pity: away with him without more words; and down he went accordingly."

This indifferent romance was superseded, as the legitimate continuation of the family history of the Palmerins, by the superior merit of the romance of

PALMERIN OF ENGLAND,[1]

son to Don Duardos, prince of England, and Flerida, daughter of the Emperor Palmerin d'Oliva.

The most ancient edition of Palmerin of England is in the French language; it was printed at Lyons, 1553, is dedicated to Diana of Poictiers, duchess of Valentinois, and is said in the title-page to be translated by Jacques Vincent from the Castilian. In 1555, an edition in the Italian language was published at Venice, which also purports that it was translated from the Spanish. This

[1] Libro del famosissimo y muy valeroso Cavallero Palmerin de Ingalaterra hijo del Rey Don Duarte.

romance next appeared in Portugueze in 1567, dedicated to the Infanta Dona Maria, by Francesco de Moraes. Of Moraes little farther is known than that he was born at Bragança; that he was treasurer to King Joam III., and perished by a violent death at Evora in 1572. He informs the reader, in the dedication, that being in France, he had discovered a French MS. chronicle of Palmerin which he had translated into Portugueze.

In spite of this declaration of Moraes, and of the circumstance that the French and Italian editions appeared twelve or fourteen years previous to the Portugueze, both professing to be translated from Spanish, Mr Southey has maintained that Palmerin of England was neither written in Spanish, as alleged in the French and Italian editions, nor translated from ancient chronicles, as pretended by Moraes; but that the Portugueze is the language in which it was originally composed, and that Moraes himself is the author.

With regard to the assertion of Moraes, it is argued justly that original romances were very frequently represented by the authors as translated from old manuscripts; that the account which he gives of discovering the chronicles implies that the story is his own, was meant to be so understood, and was understood so; and that if the work had

not been original, the pretence concerning the manuscripts could not have escaped detection, as the French and Italian versions could not have been unknown in Lisbon at the period of its publication.

The difficulty arising from the priority of the French and Italian translations, Mr Southey resolves by adducing similar instances in which translations have been made from written copies, and published before the original, and by conjecturing that Moraes wrote the book in France, but delayed printing it till his return to Portugal, and that meanwhile it was translated into French and Italian. As to the assertion in the title-pages of the French editions, that it was taken from the Castilian, he believes that term to be used as synonimous with Spanish, which was, at that time, employed to denote generally the language of all the writers of the peninsula. He remarks, besides, that the Spaniards lay no claim to the romance, and that he knows no proof that it exists in their language.

Thus the way is cleared for the evidence of its Portugueze original, which consists in an assertion of Cervantes, that there was a report that it was composed by a wise king of Portugal, which, though a mistake as to the author, evinces the

general belief that it was written in Portugueze. There is also, according to Mr Southey, internal evidence that Palmerin of England was the work of an inhabitant of Portugal, since to much of the scenery the author has given not only natural but local truth.

In Palmerin, as in many other romances of chivalry, the author gives an account not only of the infancy of the hero, but the adventures of his parents. Don Duardos, son of Fadrique, king of England, was united, as mentioned in the romance of Primaleon, to Flerida, daughter of Palmerin d'Oliva. One day, while pursuing a wild boar in a forest of England, this prince loses his way and arrives at a castle, into which he is admitted, and is afterwards treacherously detained by a giantess called Eutropa, with the view of revenging the death of her brother, who had been slain by Palmerin d'Oliva. This giantess had a nephew called Dramuziando, who resided in the castle, and was the son of the person who had been killed by Palmerin. Dramuziando presents the character (a very singular one in romance) of an amiable and accomplished giant. He was, we are told, pleasant in discourse, and (which was probably no difficult matter) surpassed all his kindred in courtesy; he conceived a friendship for

Duardos, and, contrary to the intentions of the aunt, treated him with much kindness while he was detained a prisoner in the castle.

Flerida having set out in search of her husband Duardos with a large escort, is seized in a forest with the pains of labour, and gives birth to two sons, who are baptized by a chaplain who was in attendance. This ceremony was scarcely concluded when a savage man, who inhabited the forest, approached, leading two lions, and possessed himself of the infants, one of whom had just been named Palmerin, the future hero of the romance, and the other Florian. Both these unfortunate children he straightway conveys to his den, and destines them as food for his lions.

After this mishap, Flerida returns disconsolate to the palace, and a messenger is despatched to Constantinople to inform the emperor and his court of the recent loss, and also of the captivity of Duardos. On receiving this intelligence, Primaleon and a number of knights depart for England. A great proportion of the early part of the romance is occupied with the adventures of those engaged in attempting the deliverance of Duardos. Most of the knights fall under the power of the giant Dramuziando, but the only revenge he takes is employing them, as he of late had employed

Duardos, to combat each new enemy that approached.

Meanwhile the wife of the savage man had prevailed on her husband to relinquish his intentions of dismembering Palmerin and Florian for behoof of his lions, and the two young princes are brought up as his own children, along with his son Selvian. One day, when Florian had roamed to a considerable distance in pursuit of a stag, he meets Sir Pridos, son to the duke of Wales, who takes him to the English court, where he is introduced to the king and Flerida, and trained up by them with much care, under name of the Child of the Desert.

Some time after this, Palmerin having strayed to the sea-coast, accompanied by Selvian, the savage man's son, sees a galley strike on the shore. From this vessel Polendos, mentioned in the romance of Primaleon, disembarks, having come to England, with other Greek knights, in quest of Duardos. At their own request he takes Palmerin and Selvian on board his ship, and sails with them to Constantinople. Here they are introduced to the emperor, who remains ignorant of the extraction of Palmerin, but is certified of his high rank by special letters from the Lady of the Lake. Our hero was in consequence knighted, and had his sword girt on by Polinarda, the daughter of Primaleon. During his

residence at court a tournament is held, in which he and an unknown knight, who bore for his device a savage leading two lions, chiefly distinguish themselves. The stranger departs without discovering himself, but he is afterwards found out to be Florian of the Desert, and is thenceforth denominated the Knight of the Savage.

Palmerin having become enamoured of Polinarda, the daughter of Primaleon, and having expressed his sentiments rather freely to the princess, she forbids him her presence. In the depth of despair he forsakes the Grecian court, and journeying towards England, under the name of the Knight of Fortune, succours on his way many injured ladies, and bears away the prize from many knights. He is always accompanied in these exploits by Selvian, who acted as his squire. Having arrived in England, while passing through a wood, they are met and recognized by the savage man. In the neighbourhood of London, Palmerin is received in a castle, of which the lady asks him to combat the Knight of the Savage, who had slain her son. On his arrival in London, the first business of Palmerin is to defy Florian of the Savage. It is customary in most Spanish romances to stake against each other the two brothers, who are the chief characters in the work. On the pre-

sent occasion, however, the combat is interrupted at the entreaty of the princess Flerida. Nor is it ever resumed, for Palmerin having overcome Dramuziando, and set Duardos at liberty, the birth of the champions is revealed by Daliarte the magician, whose declaration is confirmed by the deposition of the savage man.

Florian and Palmerin now leave the court of England in company, but it is impossible to follow them through the long series of adventures in which they engage. A great proportion of the exploits in the romance are performed by the brothers, separately or united. Some of the adventures of Palmerin, particularly those in the Perilous Isle, possess considerable beauty and interest. A number of exploits are, however, attributed to subordinate characters, and a proper share is assigned to the giant Dramuziando, who, though he had been vanquished by Palmerin, is allowed to retain his castle, on account of his courtesy and good treatment of Duardos. Eutropa, nevertheless, still retains her ill will to the family of the Palmerins; and many of the incidents in the romance arise from her machinations, and those of other aggrieved giants, to avenge themselves on the brothers; but all their efforts are ultimately counteracted by the magician Daliarte.

The chief scene of adventure is the castle of Almourol. There, under care of a giant, dwelt the beautiful but haughty Miraguarda, whose portraiture was delineated on a shield, which hung over the gate of the castle. This picture was, in rotation, protected by knights, who had become enamoured of the original, against all other knights who had the audacity to maintain that the charms of their ladies were comparable to those of Miraguarda. At length, during a period when the picture was guarded by the giant Dramuziando, one of the adorers of the original, it is stolen by Albayzar, soldan of Babylon, who had been positively commanded to gain this trophy by his mistress the Lady Targiana, daughter of the Grand Turk.

Finally, all the knights being assembled at Constantinople, espouse their respective ladies. Palmerin is united to Polinarda, and his brother Florian to Leonarda, queen of Thrace, whose disenchantment had been one of the principal adventures of Palmerin.

The romance, however, does not conclude with these marriages. Florian, whose character resembles that of the younger brothers in the history of Amadis, while residing at the court of the Grand Turk, had run off with his daughter. That prin-

cess was now married to Albayzar, soldan of Babylon, who had stolen for her sake the portrait of Miraguarda; but as she still retained a strong resentment at the conduct of her former lover, she employed a magician to avenge her on the queen of Thrace, who had been lately united to Florian. This queen, while disporting in a garden, is unexpectedly carried off by two enormous griffins, and conveyed to a magic castle, where she is confined in the image of a huge serpent. Florian's attention is now occupied by the discovery and disenchantment of his queen, in which he at length succeeds by the assistance of the magician Daliarte. The scheme of revenge having thus failed, Albayzar, on account of the affront which had been offered to his queen by Florian, and exasperated at the refusal of the emperor to deliver that prince into his power, invades the Greek territories with two hundred thousand men, and accompanied by all the kings and soldans of the east. Three desperate engagements are fought between the Christians and Turks, in which Albayzar is slain, and the pagan army totally annihilated; not, however, without great loss on the other side, for though Palmerin, Primaleon, Dramuziando, and Florian survive, a large proportion of the Christian knights perish in these fatal encounters.

The fame and reputation of this romance, which divides the palm of popularity with Amadis de Gaul, has probably been, in some measure, owing to the commendations of Cervantes. For, if we may judge from the number of editions, Palmerin was less read in the age during which tales of chivalry were in fashion than many of its contemporaries; and hence its celebrity was probably the consequence of the extravagant eulogy of Cervantes. "And this Palm of England, let it be kept and preserved as a thing unique; and let another casket be made for it, such as that which Alexander found among the spoils of Darius, and set apart, that the works of the poet Homer might be kept in it. This book, Sir Comrade, is of authority, for two reasons; the one, because it is a right good one in itself, and the other, because the report is that a wise king of Portugal composed it. All the adventures at the castle of Miraguarda are excellent, and managed with great skill; the discourses are courtly and clear, observing, with much propriety and judgment, the decorum of the speaker. —I say then, saving your good pleasure, Master Nicholas, this and Amadis de Gaul should be saved from the fire, and all the rest be, without farther search, destroyed."—Cervantes, who had so keen a perception of the absurdities of the productions

of knight errantry, would not so strongly have praised this romance unless it had deserved some commendation; but though Palmerin be certainly the most entertaining of the romances of the peninsula, I cannot help thinking the author of Don Quixote has somewhat overrated its merit. The arrangement of the incidents is as wild and perplexed as in other tales of chivalry. Besides, the individual adventures of Palmerin are invariably prosperous, and we never feel any fear or interest on his account, as we are assured of a happy issue by the frequent recurrence of success. The sentiments, too, are trivial, and the characters of the heroines insipid, even beyond what is common in romances of chivalry. Indeed, the author seems to have entertained a very unfavourable opinion of the fair sex, and indulges in many ill-bred reflections on their envy, unreasonableness, and inconstancy; but he has not decked out his females even with these attributes. The portraits of the knights, however, are better brought out and discriminated. As in many other Spanish romances, Palmerin represents a faithful lover, and Florian a man of gallantry, though more than usually licentious. But the most interesting characters are Daliarte, a learned and solitary magician, who resides in the Valley of Perdition, immersed in pro-

found study; and the giant Dramuziando, for whose safety we feel principally anxious during the last terrible conflicts. The Emperor Palmerin d'Oliva, too, is here represented as a fine old man, with a high sense of honour, and great courtliness of speech. The damsels, the strange knights, and the castles which abound in this romance, are generally introduced and described in such a manner as to excite considerable curiosity concerning them; and I know no work of the kind where interest and suspense, with regard to the conclusion, are kept up with greater success. If in the rival work of Amadis de Gaul there be more fire and animation, in Palmerin there is infinitely more variety, delicacy, and sweetness.

Mr Southey, however, has drawn a parallel between this romance and Amadis de Gaul, which, on the whole, is much to the advantage of the latter. "In the description of battles," he says, "the author of Amadis exceeds all poets and all romancers, as he fairly fixes attention on the champions. But Moraes sets every thing else before the eyes; he is principally occupied with the lists and spectators, and enters into the feelings both of those who are engaged and of those who look on. The magic of Moraes," he continues, "is not good; the cup of tears is a puerile fiction compared with the

garland which blossoms out on the head of Oriana. The hero of Moraes is courageous, virtuous, and generous, to the height of chivalry; but it is abstract courage, virtue, and generosity, with nothing to stamp and individualize the possessor. The Florian of Moraes, however, is admirably supported, and he is a more prominent character than Galaor. But libertinism is only a subordinate feature of Galaor; that which stands foremost is his high sense of chivalrous honour. Florian has his wit, his good-humour, and his courage, to palliate his faults; but these are not sufficient, and he is never respected by the reader as Galaor is. What is excused in one as a weakness, is condemned in the other as a vice. This is unfortunately managed; for, as he is the cause of the final war, his character should have been clearer. Had Targiana been sister instead of wife to Albayzar, it would have been felt the Turks were in the right; and as it is, they are not so manifestly in the wrong, as the author should have made them."

The romance of Palmerin was translated from French into English by Anthony Munday, the Grub-street patriarch, as he has been called, towards the close of the sixteenth century. This work, however, according to Mr Southey, was extremely ill executed, as it was, in a great measure,

performed by journeymen who understood neither French nor English. It has lately been translated from the original, with much elegance, by the author so often quoted in the above inquiries concerning the romances of the peninsula.

The work with which we have been last occupied may be regarded as closing the family history of the Palmerins. It was, I believe, subsequently carried on in Portugueze, but this continuation obtained no celebrity nor success. There is, however, a very pretty French romance of the sixteenth century, by Gabriel Chapuis, who translated so many of the Spanish tales of chivalry, entitled Darinel, son of Primaleon. The most interesting adventures relate to the Palace of Illusions, raised by a magician, in which every one who entered fancied he enjoyed all things that he wished. This work is announced as translated from the Spanish, but was in fact the composition of Chapuis.

Besides the romances concerning the imaginary families of Amadis and Palmerin, there are mentioned in the scrutiny of Don Quixote's library, Don Olivante de Laura, by Antonio de Torquemada, which is condemned for its arrogance and absurdity, and Felixmarte of Hyrcania, which is sent to the bon-fire in the court, for the harshness

and dryness of the style, spite of the strange birth and chimerical adventures of its hero. Dr Johnson, I suppose, is the only person in this land who has been guilty of reading the whole of Felixmarte of Hyrcania. Bishop Percy informed Boswell, " That the doctor, when a boy, was immoderately fond of romances of chivalry, and he retained his fondness for them through life; so that, spending part of a summer at my parsonage-house in the country, he chose for his regular reading the old Spanish romance of Felixmarte of Hyrcania, in folio, which he read quite through." —*Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. I. p. 25, 8vo.,*

The more celebrated romance of Don Belianis of Greece,[1] is frequently alluded to in Avellaneda's continuation of Don Quixote, and is also mentioned by Cervantes more favourably than most others of the same description, in the scrutiny of the library. " This which I have in my hands, said the barber, is the famous Belianis. Truly, cried the curate, he with his second, third, and fourth parts, had need of a dose to purge his ex-

[1] Libro primero del valoroso e invencible prencipe Don Belianis de Grecia, hijo del Emperador Don Belanio de Grecia, sacada de lengua Griega en la qual le escrivio el sabio Fristan por un hijo del vertuoso varon Toribio Fernandez. *Printed* 1564 *and* 1579.

cessive choler: Besides, his castle of Fame should be demolished, and a heap of other rubbish removed, in order to which I give my vote to grant them the benefit of a reprieve, and as they shew signs of amendment, so shall mercy or justice be used towards them: In the mean time take them into custody, and keep them safe at home; but let none be permitted to converse with them."

It would be needless to detain and tire the reader with any account of the history of the *Invencible* Cavallero Don Polindo, son of the king of Numidia, and his love with the Princess Belisia; of the *Valeroso Cavallero* Don Cirongilio of Thrace, son of the king of Macedonia, written by Bernardo de Vargas, or of the *Esforzado Cavallero* Don Clarian de Landanis, by Geronimo Lopez.

There still remain, however, two romances of considerable beauty and interest, which first appeared in the dialect of Catalonia.

When the Romans were expelled from Spain by the northern invaders, the language they bequeathed was adopted, but soon disfigured by the conquerors. During the ninth century it was still farther corrupted by the inroads of the Moors, and had at length so far degenerated, that the Arabic became the chief vehicle of literary composition.

In the eleventh century the French *Romans* lan-

guage was introduced into the peninsula by prince Henry of Lorraine, who married a daughter of Alphonso VI. of Castile, and was diffused by the intercourse which subsisted between the French and Spanish nations, in their mutual resistance of the Saracens. A great change in consequence took place in the language of Spain, and five or six different dialects were spoken in the peninsula. Of these, the earliest, the most widely extended, and the one which bore the strongest resemblance to the southern French *Romans*, was that adopted in Catalonia. It was spoken in that province, in Roussillon and Valentia; and, till the period of the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, (when the Castilian tongue became prevalent,) it was the language which afforded the best specimens, both of prose and poetical composition. Petrarch is said to have been largely indebted to the amatory verses of the Troubadours of this region, and two of the earliest and most interesting romances that have been produced in Spain, appeared in the dialect of Catalonia, previous to their translation into the Castilian.

Of these the earliest, and perhaps the most curious, is

TIRANTE THE WHITE,[1]

the first part of which was written in the Catalonian dialect by Johan Martorell, a knight of Valencia, but being left unfinished by him, it was compleated by Juan de Galba. The first of these authors informs us he translated it from the English, by which Mr Warton conjectures he meant the Breton language, in which it may have been originally written. It is difficult to say whether this assertion of the author be true, or whether he has framed the story, to give some appearance of authenticity to his romance, which relates the exploits of a Breton knight. That part of it which contains the history of the earl of Warwick, is, I think, most probably translated, as it closely corresponds with the old English romance, Guy of Warwick, which was versified from the original French in the beginning of the 14th century;—a period long preceding the composition of Tirante the White in Spain.

[1] Los cinco libros del esforçado y invencibile Cavallero Tirante el Blanco di Roca Salada Cavellero de la Garrotera, el qual por su alta Cavalleria alcançó a ser principe y Cesar del imperio de Grecia.

At what time this romance was written or translated by Martorell, is not precisely ascertained. It was first printed, however, at Valencia, in 1490; and there is mentioned in it a work on chivalry, entitled, L'Arbre des Batailles, which was written in 1390; so that it must have been composed between these two periods. But the date may, I think, be still farther limited. The Canary islands were discovered in 1326, and began to be well known in Europe about 1405. Now, from the false notions expressed concerning them in Tirante, and the extravagant idea which seems to be entertained of their power and magnitude, it is probable this romance was written before their precise situation and extent were ascertained in the peninsula. On the whole, therefore, the era of its composition may be pretty safely fixed about the year 1400.

Tirante, as has been mentioned, was first published in the Catalonian dialect at Valencia, in 1490. It was thence transferred into the Castilian language, and published at Valladolid in 1511, one volume folio. There has been no subsequent Spanish edition, but the Italian translation by Lelio Manfredi has passed through three impressions, of which the first appeared in 1538. The Count de Caylus more lately brought it forward in a

French garb, after the fashion of the Count de Tressan; he has altered the incidents of the story in some places; in others he has considerably abridged the work, by omitting precepts of chivalry, and has almost every where rendered it more licentious.

The hero of this romance, while on his journey to attend the tournaments, which were about to be celebrated in England, (on account of the marriage of the king of that country with a princess of France,) is accidentally separated from his companions, and having fallen asleep on his horse, arrives in rather an unwarlike attitude at the hermitage of William, earl of Warwick.

This nobleman, disgusted with the European world, had gone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Thence he spread a report of his death, which seems to have been eagerly received in England, returned to his own country in disguise, and established himself in a retirement near the castle in which his countess resided. After he had passed some time in solitude, fortune gave him an opportunity of rendering signal service to his country. The great king of the Canary islands had landed in Britain with a formidable army, and had subdued nearly the whole of England, while the monarch of the conquered country, driven successively

from London and Canterbury, had sought refuge in the town of Warwick, which was soon invested by the Canary forces. At this crisis, the earl, who lived in the neighbourhood, came to the assistance of his prince; killed the intrusive monarch in single combat, and defeated his successor in a pitched battle. After these important services the earl discovered himself to his countess, and again retired to his hermitage. In the English metrical romance of Guy of Warwick, translated from the French, that earl, after a long absence, returns to England, in disguise of a palmer, visits his countess unknown to her, and delivers King Athelstane from an invasion of the Danes, who had besieged him in Winchester, by overthrowing their champion in single combat.

William of Warwick was engaged in the perusal of L'Arbre des Batailles, when the unknown and drowsy knight arrived at his habitation. When roused from the sleep in which he was plunged, he informed the earl that his name was Tirante el Blanco, that he was so called, because his father was lord of the marches of Tirranie, situated in that part of France which was opposite to the coast of England, and that his mother was daughter to the duke of Britany. After this genealogical sketch, he mentioned his design of attending the

tournaments, and receiving the honour of knighthood. His host accordingly read to him a chapter from L'Arbre des Batailles, which was a work on the institutions of chivalry. This prelection he accompanied with a learned commentary, explaining the different sorts of arms which were used in combats, and dwelling on the exploits of ancient knights: "But, as it is late," continues he, "your company must be at a distance; you are ignorant of the roads, and you will be in danger of losing yourself in the woods, with which this district is covered. I therefore recommend an immediate departure." The above arguments might certainly have supported a more hospitable conclusion, but Tiran is dismissed with a present of the Tree of Battles, as a manual of chivalry, and a request to revisit the hermitage on his return from the tournaments.

Tiran accordingly, when the festival, which lasted a twelvemonth, was concluded, repaired to the hermitage, and, encouraged by the proofs he had formerly received of the hospitable disposition of the earl, brought his companions, to the number of thirty-eight, along with him. The earl, after he had recovered from his consternation, demanded an account of the tournaments, and enquired who had most distinguished himself. He is answered by

Diofebo, one of his guests, that it was Tiran himself; that a French lord, called Villermes, having objected to his wearing a knot which had adorned the bosom of the beautiful Agnes, daughter to the duke of Berri, had defied him to mortal combat, and had required that they should fight armed with a paper buckler and a helmet of flowers. The combatants having accordingly met in this fantastic array, Villermes was killed in the encounter. Tiran having recovered from eleven wounds he had received, six of which, according to surgical etiquette, ought to have been mortal, killed in one day four knights, who were brothers in arms, and who proved to be the dukes of Burgundy and Bavaria, and the kings of Poland and Friezeland. This last monarch found an avenger in one of his subjects, Kyrie Eleison, or, *Lord have mercy upon us*, who was suspected of a descent from the ancient giants. On arriving in England, this champion visited the tomb of his master, and expired of grief on beholding his monument, and the arms of Tiran suspended over the banners of his sovereign. His place was supplied by his brother Thomas of Montauban, whose stature afforded still more unequivocal symptoms of gigantic ancestry. In spite of his pedigree, or perhaps in consequence of it, as giants were always unlucky

in the romantic ages, he was overthrown by Tiran, and consented to beg his life.

Here ends the relation of the exploits of Tiran, during the marriage festivals of England. From the hermitage of the earl of Warwick he returns to Britany, where a messenger soon after arrives with intelligence that Rhodes and its knights are closely besieged by the Genoese and the sultan of Cairo. Tiran sets out for the relief of this island, and takes Philip, the youngest son of the king of France, along with him. In the course of their voyage they anchor in the roads of Palermo. The king of Sicily throws over a platform from the port to the vessel of Tiran, and covers it with tapestry, hanging down to the sea. Tiran and his companions, having been treated on shore with corresponding magnificence, proceed on their destination. The siege of Rhodes is raised immediately on their landing, and after this success they return to Sicily, where Philip is united to the princess of that country.

Soon after the marriage of Philip and the princess, a messenger from the emperor of Constantinople announces the invasion of his master's territories, by a Moorish soldan and the Grand Turk. Our hero proceeds to the succour of the Greek empire, and immediately on his arrival is

entrusted by its sovereign with the chief command of the forces. After Tiran receives this appointment, a great part of the romance is occupied with long details of the war carried on against the Turks, who are defeated in several pitched battles. In one of these the kings of Cappadocia and Egypt, and a hundred thousand men, are killed on the part of the enemy: the sultan, the king of Africa, the Grand Turk, and Grand Turk's son, are severely wounded; with a loss of only twelve hundred and thirty-four men on the side of the Greeks. Being unable to withstand such inequality of slaughter, the Turks are forced to solicit a truce. This being granted, the interval of repose is occupied with splendid festivals and tournaments, held at Constantinople. During this period, Urganda, sister of the renowned Arthur, arrives at Constantinople in quest of her brother. The emperor exhibits to her an old gentleman he kept in a cage, whom she speedily recognises as the object of her search. As long as he retains his sword, the famed Escalibor, in his hand, he returns most pertinent answers to the questions addressed to him; but when deprived of this support, his observations becomes extremely infantile. Urganda is permitted to take him along with her. On the same evening she gives a splendid supper,

in the vessel in which she had arrived, to the emperor and his court, and sets sail with her brother next morning. But it is not said how Arthur found his way to Constantinople, nor where he went after his departure. In this stage, too, of the romance, the intrigues of the Greek ladies with the French knights who had accompanied Tiran to Constantinople, are related, and the particulars of some of them detailed with unnecessary minuteness. Hyppolito seduces, or rather is seduced by, the empress; and Diofebo, afterwards created duke of Macedonia, carries on an amour with Stephania, one of the attendants of Carmesina, daughter of the emperor. Tiran becomes enamoured of this princess, who, during day, was always surrounded by a hundred and seventy damsels; but at other seasons he has frequent interviews with her, by favour of one of her attendants, called Plazirdemavida. The good understanding, however, which subsisted between Tiran and the princess, is at length interrupted by the plots of the Vedova Reposada, another attendant, who, having fallen in love with Tiran, contrives to make him jealous of her mistress, by a stratagem resembling that which deceives Claudio in Much Ado about Nothing, and also the lover of Geneura in the fifth canto of the Orlando Furioso.

The truce between the Turks and Christians being expired, Tiran sets out for the army without taking leave of the princess. While the vessel in which he was to be conveyed is still at anchor in the roads, she dispatches Plazirdemavida to enquire into the reasons of his conduct; but a storm having meanwhile arisen, and the ship having been driven from its moorings, her emissary is unable to return to Constantinople, and the vessel is carried towards the coast of Africa. Two mariners convey Plazirdemavida on shore. Tiran remains with a single sailor in the vessel, until it is at length wrecked on the coast of Tunis. While wandering on the shore, our hero meets accidentally with the ambassador of the king of Tremecen, is conducted by him to court, and proves of great service to that monarch in the wars in which he was engaged. On one occasion Tiran besieges the town of Montagata, when, to his great surprise, Plazirdemavida, whom he believed lost, comes to his camp to intercede for the inhabitants, and is now appointed queen of an extensive territory. Tiran, by means of similar alliances and conquests, is enabled to embark a hundred and fifty thousand infantry, and eighty-eight thousand cavalry, for the succour of the Greek emperor. Soon after his return to Constantinople with this formidable armament, he

burns the Turkish fleet, and, by taking a strong position in rear of their army, (which rendered a retreat impracticable) he ultimately secures an advantageous peace.

Splendid preparations are now made for the nuptials of Tiran and Carmesina; an event which Tiran had rendered insipid before his last expedition against the Turks. While on his return to Constantinople, after the conclusion of the treaty, he receives orders, at the distance of a day's journey from the city, to wait till the preparations be completed. In this interval, while lounging one day on the banks of a river, and conversing on his happiness with the kings of Ethiopia, Fez, and Sicily, he is seized with a pleurisy, and expires soon after. When this intelligence is brought to Constantinople, the emperor dies of grief; and the demise of the princess on the same day completes the triple mortality. The empress having given orders for the funerals, passes the ensuing night with her lover Hyppolito, who redoubles her impatience to share with him the throne to which she had now succeeded. After a joint reign of three years, she bequeaths to him the empire, and her place is supplied by a daughter of the king of England.[1]

[1] The celebrated Baron Grimm, "who did not, it seems,

I have been thus minute in the account of Tirante the White, as it is one of the three romances preserved in the scrutiny of Don Quixote's library. "By her taking so many romances together," says Cervantes, "there fell one at the barber's feet, who had a mind to see what it was, and found it to be Tirante the White. God save me, quoth the priest, with a loud voice, is Tirante the White there? Give me him here, neighbour, for I shall find in him a treasure of delight and a mine of entertainment. Here we have Don Kyrie Eleison of Montalvan, a valorous knight, and his brother Thomas of Montalvan, and the knight Fonseca, and the combat which the valiant Detriante fought with Alano; and the smart conceits of the damsel Plazerdemavida, with the amours and artifices of the widow Reposada, and madam the empress in love with her squire Hyppolito." He then advises the housewife to take it home, and read it; "for though," continues the priest,

add to his other qualifications the charms of an agreeable person, took incredible pains to supply his natural deficiency by the artificial resources of the toilet. The quantity of ceruse, or white paint, with which he daily filled up the lines and wrinkles of his face, joined to his want of moderation in the enjoyment of his *bonnes fortunes*, procured for him the appellation of *Tyran le Blanc*."

"the author deserved to be sent to the gallies for writing so many foolish things seriously, yet, in its way,[1] it is the best book in the world. Here the knights eat and sleep, and die in their beds, and make their wills before their death, with several things which are wanting in all other books of this kind."

It cannot, indeed, be denied, that Tirante the White is of a nature altogether different from the other romances of chivalry. It possesses much more quaintness and pleasantry. Nor is it occupied with the detached adventures of a dozen different knights; the attention is constantly fixed on the adventures of Tiran, of whom the reader never loses sight, and, except in the account of the fetes in England, which occupies a small part of the work, there are hardly any tournaments or single combats. Tiran is more a skilful commander than a valiant knight, and subdues his enemies more by a knowledge in the art of war, than by his personal courage. In other romances the heroes are only endowed with bravery, all besides is the work of magicians. Tiran, on the contrary, performs nothing incredible, every thing he does lies within the sphere of human capacity. Giants,

[1] Per su estilo. This has been rendered "in point of style," by some of the translators of Cervantes.

so prevalent in other romances, are here dwindled to nothing. Kyrie Eleison and his brother Thomas are but meagre monsters. No helpless females are protected, no enchanted castles restored to the ordinary properties of stone and lime. I remember, indeed, no magical story, except that of Espertius, who, while on his way from Africa to assist Tiran at Constantinople, is driven on the island of Cos, where he restores the daughter of Hippocrates to her original form. She appeared to him in the shape of a dragon, into which she had been changed by Diana; but, by consenting to kiss her on the mouth, the knight effected her transformation. A belief in a tradition precisely the same, is attributed to the inhabitants of Cos, in a book of modern French travels, of which I have forgotten the title. Sir John Mandeville, in his Travels, also relates a story somewhat similar. Speaking of an enchanted dragon in the isle of Cos, "a yonge man," says he, "that wiste not of the dragoun, went out of a shippe, and went throghe the isle, till that he cam into the cave; here he saw a damsel who bad him come agen on the morwe, and then come and kysse hire on the mouth, and have no drede, for I schall do the no manner harm, alle be it that thou see me in likeness of a dragoun, for thoughe thou see me hide-

ous and horrible to loken onne, I do the to wyten that it is made be enchantment, for withouten doubt I am none other than thou seest now, an woman, and zyff thou kysse me thou shalt have all this tresure, and be my lord, and lord also of that isle." This ambiguous lady, however, was not the daughter of Hippocrates, the dragon of the Spanish romance, who, according to Sir John Mandeville, frequented a different island, " and some men seyne that in the isle of Lango is yit the daughter of Ypocras, in forme and likenesse of a great dragoun, that is a hundred fadme in length as men seyne, for I have not seen hire, and thei of the isles callen hire Ladie of the Land,"—a fiction which may partly have originated in one of that physician's children being called Draco, a circumstance mentioned by Suidas on the authority of Galen. The story of Espertius and the daughter of Hippocrates was probably conveyed to the author of Tirante by some obscure, but prevalent tradition; and, through the medium of this work, a similar incident has been adopted in innumerable tales of wonder and many romantic poems. In the 25th and 26th cantos of the second book of Berni's Orlando Innamorato, the paladin Brandimarte, after surmounting many obstacles, penetrates into the recesses of an enchanted palace. There he finds

a fair damsel seated upon a tomb, who announces to him, that in order to achieve her deliverance, he must raise the lid of the sepulchre, and kiss whatever being should issue forth. The knight, having pledged his faith, proceeds to open the tomb, out of which a monstrous snake raises itself with a tremendous hiss. Brandimarte with much reluctance fulfils the conditions of the adventure, and the monster is instantly changed into a beautiful fairy, who loads her deliverer with benefits (Scott's Minstrelsy, vol. II. p. 84). In the ballad of Kempion, the prince of that name effects a similar transformation by a similar effort. There is a like story in the 6th tale of the Contes Amoureux de Jean Flore, written toward the end of the 15th century.

The second provincial romance to which I formerly alluded, is that of

PARTENOPEX DE BLOIS,[1]

which was written in the Catalonian dialect in the 13th century, and printed at Tarragona in 1488.

[1] Libro del esforzado Cavallero Conde Partinuples que fue Emperador de Constantinopla.

The Castilian translation appeared at Alcala, 1513, 4to, and afterwards in 1547. M. Le Grand, however, has endeavoured to establish that this work was originally French, and informs us that his own modern version, appended to his Contes et Fabliaux, is made from a manuscript poem in the library of St Germain des Prés, which he conjectures to be of the 12th century.

The Princess Melior succeeded her father Julian in the Greek empire. Though well qualified to govern, from natural talents, and the advantages derived from a knowledge of magic, her subjects insisted on her selecting a husband, but granted two years for the choice. She accordingly despatched emissaries to all the courts of Europe, with instructions to enable these messengers to make a judicious election.

At this time there lived in France a young man, called Partenopex de Blois, who was nephew to the king of Paris. One day, while hunting with his uncle in the forest of Ardennes, he is separated from his party while pursuing a wild boar, and night falling, he loses his way in the woods. On the following day, after long wandering, he comes to the sea-shore, and perceives a splendid vessel moored near the land, which he enters to ascer-

tain if any person were on board, but he finds no one. Now this pinnace happened to be enchanted, and, disdaining the vulgar operations of a pilot, as soon as Partenopex had embarked, it spontaneously steered a right course, and after a prosperous voyage, arrived in the bay of a delightful country. Vessels of this sort are common in romance. There is one in the beautiful fabliau of Gugemar. In the 7th canto of the Rinaldo we have an enchanted bark, which was solely directed by the force of magic, and invariably conducted the knights who entered it to some splendid adventure. A self-navigated gondelay is also introduced in Spenser's Faery Queen, (b. ii. c. 6 :)—

> Eftsoones her shallow ship away did slide,
> More swift than swallow sheres the liquid skye,
> Withouten oare or pilot it to guide,
> Or winged canvas with the wind to fly;
> For it was taught the way which she would have,
> And both from rocks and flats itself could wisely save.

The finest of these barks is that which conducts the Christian knights, in their search of Rinaldo, to the residence of Armida. This fiction, however, was not the invention of the middle ages, but is of classical origin; vessels of this nature being

described by Alcinous to Ulysses, in the 8th book of the Odyssey ;—

> So shalt thou instant reach the realms assign'd,
> In wondrous ships self-moved, inspired with mind ;
> No helm secures their course, no pilot guides,
> Like man, intelligent, they plough the tides,
> Conscious of every coast, and every bay,
> That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray :
> Though clouds and darkness veil the encumber'd sky,
> Fearless through darkness and through clouds they fly.

Partenopex having disembarked from his magical conveyance, approached and entered a castle of marvellous extent and beauty, which stood near the harbour. In the saloon, which was lighted by diamonds, he finds prepared an exquisite repast, but no one appears. Attendance could be the better dispensed with, as the dainties placed themselves of their own accord on his lips. After he had taken advantage of their hospitality, a lighted torch showed him the way to his bed-chamber, where he was undressed by invisible hands. The notion of such a palace, like many other incidents in this romance, must have been suggested by the story of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius. A similar fiction has been adopted by the earliest romantic poet of Italy : in the second canto of the Morgante Maggiore, that giant comes with his master

Orlando to a splendid and mysterious castle, in which the apartments are richly furnished, and the table spread with every sort of wines and provisions. After the guests have partaken of a sumptuous repast, they retire to rest on rich couches prepared for their repose, no one having appeared in the course of the entertainment.

When Partenopex had gone to bed, and the lights had been extinguished, a lady entered the apartment, who, after some tedious expostulation on the freedom he had used in usurping the usual place of her repose, evinced a strong determination not to be put out of her way. In the course of the night his companion acquaints him that she is Melior of Constantinople, who, it will be remembered, was a great empress, and a fairy at the same time. Having fallen in love with Partenopex, on report of her emissaries, she had contrived the enchantments he had lately witnessed. She farther intimated, that he was to remain at her castle, but that he would forfeit her affections if he attempted to obtain a sight of her person before the lapse of two years; a deprivation for which she seemed disposed to compensate by the most ample gratification of his other senses. In the morning the most splendid habiliments were brought him by Uracla, the sister of the empress fairy. Having

dogs and horses at his command, he usually spent the day in hunting, and in the evenings was entertained by a concert from invisible musicians.

Anxious, at length, to revisit his native country, which he learned had been attacked by foreign enemies, Partenopex hazarded an exposition of his wishes to his mistress, who, after exacting a promise of return, accommodates him with the magic sloop in which he had arrived, and which in a short while conveys him to France. On the evening he landed he sets out for Paris, and on his way meets with a knight, whom he discovers to be Gaudin, the lover of Uracla. The strictest intimacy arises between these two persons after a dreadful combat; a mode of introduction, which, though now fallen into disuse, was the usual commencement of friendship in those chivalrous ages :—

Deux Chevaliers qui se sont bien battus,
Soit à Cheval, soit à la noble escrime,
Avec le sabre ou de longs fers pointus,
De pied en cap tout couverts, ou tout nus,
Ont l'un pour l'autre une secrete estime;
Et chacun d'eux exalte les vertus
Et les grands coups de son digne adversaire,
Lorsque surtout il n'est plus en colere :
Mais s'il advient, après ce beau conflit,
Quelque accident—quelque triste fortune,

Quelque misere à tous lex deux commune,
Incontinent, le Malheur les unit ;
L' Amitié nait de leurs destins contraires,
Et deux heros persécutés sont Freres.
La Pucelle, Preface au chant IX.

" Expell'd their native homes by adverse fate,
They knock'd alternate at each other's gate ;
Then blazed the castle at the midnight hour
For him whose arms had shook its firmest tower."

Soon after the arrival of Partenopex in France, Angelica, the pope's niece, who was at this time residing at the court of Paris, falls in love with him, and in order to detach him from his engagement with the fairy, which she had discovered by means of an intercepted letter, she employs a holy man, who repaired to Partenopex, and denounced Melior as a demon. He found that her lover was proof against an insinuation with regard to his mistress possessing a serpent's tail, which he begged to be excused from crediting, but that he was somewhat startled by the assurance, that she had a black skin, white eyes, and red teeth.

Partenopex having returned to the residence of the fairy, resolves to satisfy himself the first night he passes in her company, as to the truth of her possessing the perfections attributed to her in France. On raising a lamp to her countenance,

he has the satisfaction to find she has been cruelly traduced; but, as she unfortunately awakes, from a drop of wax falling on her bosom, he incurs her utmost resentment. His life is spared at the intercession of Uracla, but, being forced to leave the castle, he repairs to the forest of Ardennes, having adopted the scheme of presenting his person as food for the wild beasts, with which that district abounded. This consummation, however desirable, was retarded by unaccountable circumstances; for though tantalized during a whole night by the roaring of lions and hissing of serpents, who gave repeated demonstrations of accommodating the knight, the provoking animals avoided all personal intercourse, and one of the monsters selected the horse of Partenopex in preference to his master. The neighings of the steed brought Uracla to the spot, who had set out in quest of Partenopex on perceiving some relenting symptoms on the part of her sister. Partenopex, all hopes of personal deglutition being at an end, consented to accompany Uracla to her castle in Tenedos, there to await the resolves of the empress fairy. Leaving Partenopex in this abode, Uracla set out on a visit to her sister, and, relying on the prowess of Partenopex, persuaded her to declare that she would bestow her hand on the victor, in a tournament

she was about to proclaim. The princesses of romance frequently offer their hand to the conqueror in a tournament, perhaps on the same principle on which Bayle says Penelope promised to espouse the suitor who should bend the bow of Ulysses.

While preparations were making for the tournaments, Parseis, an attendant of Uracla, having become enamoured of Partenopex, took him out one day in a boat. After some time, Partenopex remarked to her the distance they were from land. The damsel then made an unequivocal declaration of attachment, and confessed she had recourse to this stratagem to have an opportunity for the avowal. Partenopex, who perhaps saw no insurmountable objection to a communication of this nature on shore, began to express much dissatisfaction at his cruise; but his complaints were interrupted by a tempest, which drove the vessel to the coast of Syria; Partenopex, being forced to land, was seized by the natives, and became the prisoner of King Herman. During his captivity, the sultan of Persia ordered this tributary monarch to accompany him to the tournaments which were about to be celebrated at Constantinople. After his departure, Partenopex having contrived to interest the queen in his behalf, was allowed to

escape, and arrived in the capital of the eastern empire just as the tournaments commenced. His most formidable antagonist was the sultan of Persia, but Partenopex is at length, by his strength and courage, permitted to lay claim to the hand of the rejoiced and forgiving empress.

The romance of Partenopex is obviously derived from the fable of Cupid and Psyche, so beautifully told by Apuleius. Psyche is borne on the wings of Zephyr to the palace of her divine admirer. Partenopex is transported in a self-navigated bark, before a favourable breeze, to the mansion of Melior. Both are entertained at a banquet produced by invisible agency, and similar restrictions on curiosity are imposed: both are seduced into disobedience by the false insinuations of friends, and adopt the same method of clearing up their suspicions. Banishment, and a forfeiture of favour, are the punishments inflicted on both; and, after a long course of penance, both are restored to the affections of their supernatural admirers. These resemblances are too close to permit us to doubt, that the story of Psyche has, directly or indirectly, furnished materials for the fiction with which we have been engaged. Some of the incidents in Partenopex have also a close resemblance to the story of the Prince of Futtun

and Mherbanou, in the Bahar-Danush, or Garden of Knowledge. That work was indeed posterior to the composition of Partenopex; but the author Inatulla acknowledges that it was compiled from Brahmin traditions. The Peri, who is the heroine of that tale, is possessed of a barge covered with jewels, which steered without sails or oars; and the prince, while in search of its incomparable mistress, arrives at a palace, in which he finds the richest effects and preparations for festivity, but no person appears.

Partenopex de Blois was translated into German, probably from the French *romans*, as early as the thirteenth century, the hero and his mistress being denominated Partenopier and Meliure. It has also been recently versified by Mr Rose. The subject is happily chosen, as the romantic nature of the incidents, and tenderness of the amatory descriptions, are highly susceptible of poetical embellishment. Melior's enchanted palace is thus described:—

Fast by the margin of the tumbling flood,
Crown'd with embattled towers, a castle stood.
The marble walls a chequer'd field display'd,
With stones of many-colour'd hues inlaid;

Tall mills, with crystal streams encircled round,
And villages, with rustic plenty crown'd—
There, fading in the distance, woods were seen
With gaily glittering spires, and battlements between.

Beneath the porch, in rich mosaic, blaze
The sun, and silver lamp that drinks his rays.
Here stood the symbol'd elements pourtray'd,
And nature all her secret springs display'd:
Here too was seen whate'er of earlier age,
Or later time, had graced the historic page;
And storied loves of knights and courtly dames,
Pageants and triumphs, tournaments and games.

CHAPTER VI.

Romances of Chivalry relating to Classical and Mythological Heroes.—Livre de Jason.—La vie de Hercule.—Alexandre, &c.

It has been suggested in a former part of this work, that many arbitrary fictions of romance are drawn from the classical and mythological authors; and in the summary given of the tales of chivalry, a few instances have been pointed out, in which the ancient stories of Greece have been introduced, modified merely by the manners of the age.

Since so much of the machinery of romance has been derived from classical fiction, it would have been strange had not the heroes of antiquity been also enlisted under the banners of chivalry. Accordingly we find that Achilles, Jason, and Hercules, were early adopted into romance, and cele-

brated in common with the knights of the Round Table, the paladins of Charlemagne, and the imaginary lineage of Amadis and Palmerin.

And though the purer streams of classical learning were probably withheld from the romancers of the middle ages, spurious materials were not wanting to make them in some degree "conscious of a former time."

The "Tale of Troy Divine" had been kept alive in two Latin works, which passed under the names of Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis. The former was a Trojan priest, mentioned by Homer,[1] and was believed to have written an account of the destruction of Troy. Ælian mentions that the history of Dares Phrygius was extant in his time, but he probably refers to some spurious author who had assumed that appellation. At length an obscure writer, posterior to the age of Constantine, availing himself of this tradition, wrote a book, which he entitled De Excidio Trojæ, and which

[1] The sons of Dares first the combat sought,
A wealthy priest, but rich without a fault;
In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,
The sons to toils of glorious battle bred.
POPE's *Iliad*, b. 5.

professed to be translated from the work of Dares Prygius, by Cornelius Nepos. A pretended epistle is prefixed, as addressed by the translator to Sallust, in which he informs his friend that he had discovered a MS. in the hand-writing of Dares, while studying at Athens, where that historian had always been held in higher estimation than Homer, &c. The forgery, sheltered under these specious names, was a current and credited manuscript in the middle ages, and was first published at Milan in 1477.

The work which bears the name of Dictys Cretensis is much longer and better written than the composition of Dares Phrygius. It is a prose Latin history, in six books, containing an account of the Trojan war, and the fate of the Grecian chiefs after their return. The author has principally drawn his materials from the Iliad, but has also pillaged other poems and histories, which contained information on the subject. In the preface to this work, it is said, that in the reign of Nero, the sepulchre of Dictys, who had been a follower of Idomeneus in the Trojan war, was thrown open by an earthquake, which shook the city of Gnossus in Crete. In the gap there was a chest found by some peasants, who carried it to their master Eupraxis. By him it was transmitted to Nero, and

was then found to contain the history of the wars of Ilium, by Dictys Cretensis. After the preface follows the dedicatory epistle from Septimius to Quintus Arcadius, who lived in the reign of Constantine. Septimius professes himself to be the Latin translator of the work, and says he had rendered it into that language from the copy Eupraxis transmitted to Nero, and in which that Cretan had merely substituted Greek letters for the Phœnician characters, in which it was originally written. Now the commonly received opinion, and that maintained by the commentators Vossius, Mercerus, and Madame Dacier, is, that every thing here is a fiction: that it is false that a Trojan history was written by Dictys; that it is equally untrue that any work of this nature was presented to Nero by Eupraxis; that even the letter of Septimius is a forgery; and that the work was written several ages posterior to the time of Constantine, by an unknown author, who feigned the story of the transmission to Nero, and the translation by Septimius. It is certain, however, that there did at one time exist a Greek work on the Trojan war, under the name of Dictys Cretensis. Of this several fragments are preserved by Cedrenus in his annals, and the book has been used by Malela in his history. These Greek fragments and quota-

tions, and also the title of the work, coincide pretty nearly with portions of the Latin Dictys. It is not therefore altogether improbable (as has been attempted to be shown by Perizonius, in a very ingenious dissertation,) that the work was originally a forgery of Eupraxis, and by him presented as an antique to Nero; that Septimius in reality translated it from the Greek of Eupraxis, and that the Greek fragments in Cedrenus and Malela are parts of the forgery of Eupraxis.

In the histories of Dares and Dictys, every thing that related to mythology and the fights of the gods was expunged; and thus in the Tale of Troy, a vacancy was left for the introduction of romantic embellishment. The story was first versified in the metrical composition of Benoit de Saint More, an Anglo-Norman poet, who lived in the reign of Henry the Second of England. He took the ground-work of events from the writings of Dares and Dictys; comprehended in his plan the Theban and Argonautic expeditions, and grafted on these incidents many new romantic inventions, dictated by the taste of his age.

This metrical work, as has been shown by Mr Douce, is the same in incident and decoration with the Latin prose chronicle of Guido de Colonna, who was formerly believed to have wrought solely

from his own fancy, and from the materials of Dares and Dictys, as, according to a usual practice in the middle age, he concealed his originals. Guido de Colonna was a native of Messina; he undertook his work at the request of the bishop of Salerno, and completed it, as he himself informs us, in 1287, more than a hundred years subsequent to the composition of its metrical prototype. This grand repertory of fiction, which is in fifteen books, is entitled Historia de Bello Trojano. Dares and Dictys were superseded by this improved and comprehensive story of the Grecian heroes, who were now decked out in the fashion of the age. Achilles and Hector were complete heroes of chivalry, and Thersites a dwarf; the walls of Ilium were of marble, and the palace of Priam was as splendid as any enchanted castle in the tales of chivalry. The chronicle of Colonna commences with Jason's expedition in quest of the Golden Fleece, and the first destruction of the city of Laomedon by that hero and Hercules. A new Troy, rebuilt by Priam, was besieged for ten years by the Greeks, and was at last delivered into their hands by the treachery of Antenor and Æneas, who, on pretence of negociating a treaty, concerted with the enemy the means of carrying off the Paladium, and of introducing the fatal

horse into the city. In the conclusion of the work, the misfortunes of the Grecian chiefs on their return home are related. The story of the death of Ulysses has much the appearance of an oriental fiction. After his arrival in Greece, it was foretold to that hero that he should perish by the hand of his son. Not being aware that he had any other child than Telemachus, he thought he provided sufficiently for security by shutting him up in a strong fortress. It happened, however, that Circe had borne a son to Ulysses after his departure from her enchanted island, who having learned the secret of his birth, when he grew up set out in quest of his father, and arrived in Ithaca; but being refused admittance at the entrance to the palace, he attacked the guards. Ulysses himself issued forth to their assistance, and, not being known by his son, fell a sacrifice to his rage, and thus accomplished the prediction. As the act was involuntary, the youth was hospitably entertained by Telemachus, and after being knighted by him, was dismissed with due honour. Causaubon informs us that this catastrophe formed the plot of a tragedy, by Sophocles, on the death of Ulysses, not now extant.

The chronicle of Colonna was very generally read in the middle ages; but the classical stories

were still more widely diffused in *Les cent Histoires de Troye, en Rime*, which were written in the 14th century, and are not confined to the tale of Troy, but include the whole history of the heroic ages.

This metrical production formed the foundation of the Recuyel des Histoires de Troye, written in prose by Raoul le Febre about the middle of the 15th century. Like the work from which it was derived, it comprehends all the fabulous periods of Greece. The first part contains the *beautiful* domestic story of Jupiter and Saturn, the feats of Perseus, and first building of Troy: the second details the exploits of Hercules, and the third recounts the destruction of Troy by the Greeks. This compilation was printed by Caxton, without date, and is generally believed to be the first impression executed by that celebrated printer. Afterwards, at the desire of Margaret, duchess of Burgundy, he translated the Recuyel des Histoires de Troye into English, and in 1471 published his version at Ghent and Cologne, which was the first book printed in the English language.

From the materials above mentioned there were formed a number of prose romances, which presented mythological characters in the guise of chivalry. In these works, the demi-gods and

nymphs of paganism are not drawn as divinities or genii, but as kings and knights, and ladies of Greece and Asia. The adventures are no doubt abundantly chimerical, but are such as might have happened to mortals endued with superior qualities, or supposed to be under the influence of enchantment.

Of this class of romances, the first editions were printed without date, but were for the most part published in the end of the 15th or beginning of the 16th century. The period of the composition of some of them can be ascertained more accurately than that of most other tales of chivalry.

Εἰθ' ὡφελ' Ἀργὼς μὴ διαπτασθαι σκαφος, but it was natural that the story of Medea, which is drawn from the earliest traditions of Greece, should have been adopted in romance. That terrific magician was the heroine of three epic poems, and had for ages been seated on the pinnacle of tragic renown: the traditions concerning her were, consequently, of all others the most current, and had been amply detailed in the metrical romance of Benoit de Sainte More, and the chronicle of Colonna. Besides, the story of Jason and Medea must, of all classical fables, have been the most captivating to the imagination of a romancer. It bore a striking

analogy to the fictions of the middle ages, especially those concerning the paladins of Charlemagne, in which we have so often beheld eastern princesses betraying and deserting their kindred for the sake of a favourite knight.

The author of the romance of JASON AND MEDEA[1] calls himself Raoul le Febre : his work is addressed to Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, probably because this prince was founder of the order called Le Toison d'Or. Philip succeeded to the dukedom in 1419, and died in 1467, so that the composition of the romance must be fixed some time between these two periods. The first French edition is without date. An English translation was printed by Caxton, in 1475.

Jason, prince of the Myrmidons, from his earliest youth, distinguished himself at tournaments. In one, which was held by the King of Bœotia to solemnize the reception of his son prince Hercules into the order of chivalry, he overthrew all his antagonists. From Bœotia, Jason and Hercules being associated in a fraternity of arms, proceeded to attend the celebration of the marriage of Hippodamia. The nuptial festivals were unpleasantly interrupted by an inroad of the Centaurs ;

[1] Livre du Preux et vaillant Jason et de la belle Medée.

but, notwithstanding the advantages possessed by these creatures in point of shape, they were exterminated by Jason. His next exploit was freeing Queen Mirro from an unwelcome lover (who was making his advances by besieging her capital,) which Jason accomplished by slaying a giant, who was the suitor's champion.

On his return home, by the malevolence of his uncle Peleus, he was sent on the Argonautic expedition, which his enemies believed a desperate undertaking. In this enterprise he was accompanied by Hercules, who stopped on the voyage to predict the destruction of the town of Laomedon. Hercules had rescued this prince's daughter from a monster, to whom she had nearly fallen a prey; but when he asked her in marriage, as his reward, from the father, he was refused, and the sarcastic monarch had subjoined, that it was not worth while to recover his daughter from the paws of one monster to deliver her into the arms of another.

The fleet afterwards reached Lemnos, where the Grecian knights were received in the same manner as in mythology, and were long remembered by the fair inhabitants of that island.

After the arrival of the expedition at Colchos, the love of Medea, and the conquest of the Golden Fleece, are related nearly as in the classical

fictions. At his departure, Jason carried Medea along with him: by her enchantments she raised a storm, while passing the Isle of Lemnos, and prevented the landing, which seems to have been intended. On arriving at the country of the Myrmidons she was well received by the old king, whom, by the most potent incantations, she restored to youth and vigour, so that he became "fort enclin a chanter, danser, et faire toutes choses joyeuses; et qui plus est, il regardoit moult voulentièrs les belles damoiselles." The sorceress also exhibited great political talents in the depression of the influence of Peleus. At last, pretending to prepare for him a similar renovation as for his brother, she accomplished his death. His daughters having complained of this usage to the king, he sentenced the enchantress to banishment, with the concurrence of Jason, who previously left the country, that he might not be witness to her disgrace. Medea poured forth a torrent of abuse on the ingratitude of the king for the services she had rendered him, among which she considered the renovation of Peleus as the chief. She rejected with marked contempt the vessel he offered, to convey her from his states; and with a stroke of her ring secured the attendance of four winged dragons, whose tails, being

properly interwoven, formed a commodious chariot; then taking up the two children she had by Jason, she set off at full speed in this unusual conveyance, in presence of King Eson and his astonished Myrmidons.

Long the fugitive magician soared over Greece without discovering any trace of Jason, for whom she still retained her former affection. At length, while hovering over the town of Corinth, she had a bird's-eye view of preparations for a great festival. On her descent she learned that these were for the approaching marriage of Jason with the princess of Corinth. Though fired with jealousy, she suspended the execution of her vengeance till the eve of the nuptials. When the ceremony was at length about to commence, she burst from a thick cloud, which opened amid thunder and lightning, and, perching on the spot where the rites were celebrating, appeared with a poniard in her hand, which she plunged into the bosoms of her two children, who were along with her; while the dragons, who were also of the party, vomited forth flames, which consumed Corinth and all its inhabitants.

Hitherto Medea has made a formidable appearance, and has been *ferox invictaque*, as Horace

could have desired her. Towards the conclusion of the romance, however, she acts a most despicable part. She inveigles into an unsuitable marriage, Egeus, king of Athens, who was then in his dotage; but she was afterwards banished, on being falsely suspected of an attempt to poison Prince Theseus, son of Egeus. Thus humiliated, she again set out on her wanderings; and as Jason, who alone had escaped from the late conflagration, was employed in a similar manner, he arrived one day at the verge of a forest, where he entered a hut in which Medea had sought refuge. Jason, softened by the remembrance of former affection and services, proposed a reconciliation. Medea, on her part, agreed to abjure magic, and became on the death of King Eson, which happened soon after, *bonne et douce femme et reine.*

In the above romance, the principal amusement arises from the curious application of Gothic manners and fictions to classical characters. Yet the work in itself is not altogether destitute of merit. It has been remarked in Mr Dibdin's Bibliotheca Spenceriana, "that, compared with many other tales of chivalry, there are few wearisome episodes and few digressions in the romance of Jason. The hero is generally kept in view, while his uniform

and almost systematic treachery towards ladies, who had surrendered to him their honour, is softened down in a manner not studiously or obtrusively disgusting. The general sentiments of this romance are completely chivalrous, and the hardy exploits and perilous escapes of the hero are varied by numerous little touches of domestic life and common-place adventure. On the whole, there is much natural and beautiful colouring in this performance."

Raoul le Febre, who wrote the romance of Jason and Medea, is also the author of that of HERCULES,[1] which, as he informs us in the body of the work, was written in 1463. It has been published separately, but originally formed part of the more extensive composition, entitled Recueil d' Histoires Troyennes. Of all heroes of antiquity, the *Vagus* Hercules bore the nearest resemblance to a knight errant; and hence his adventures must have been wonderfully attractive to the imagination of a romancer. His story commences with the well-known stratagem of King Jove and his squire Mercury, which produced the hero of the romance. When he grows up, his labours are not undergone on account of the edict of Ju-

[1] La Vie du preux et vaillant Hercule.

piter, or the wrath of Juno, but are spontaneously undertaken to render himself deserving of a Bœotian princess, of whom he is enamoured. The detail of the performance of his labours has received a colouring consistent with the origin attributed to them. Pluto is a king who resides in a gloomy castle: the Fates are duennas, who watch the actions of Proserpine, and the entrance to the castle is guarded by the giant Cerberus; who, according to this enlightened author, was believed a dog by the poets and the vulgar. A considerable part of the romance is occupied with the conquest of Spain by Hercules. He took Merida from Geryon, who was feigned to have three heads, because he was originally lord of the three Balearic islands; and having pursued him from place to place, at length slew him near the foot of a castle, which was thenceforth called Gerona.

The romance of Oedipus was written about the same time with that of Hercules. Of his story, the outline is nearly the same as in the ancient Greek authors. The Sphinx, however, is a giant of ferocious courage, and of a subtlety, which, in books of chivalry, is very rarely coupled with exuberant dimensions.

We have already seen that Alexander the Great was a leading character in the early part of Perce-

forest; but there is a work, entitled the HISTORY OF ALEXANDER,[1] which is devoted to the celebration of his exploits. The Macedonian hero was chiefly indebted for romantic embellishment to a fabulous life of him, which appeared in Greek about the middle of the 11th century, during the reign of the Emperor Michael Ducas, and which passed under the name of Calisthenes, who was a contemporary of Alexander. This spurious work was written by Simeon Seth, keeper of a palace of Constantinople, and was in a great measure translated from Persic traditions, an origin which accounts for the fables that have crept into it. Eastern romances, particularly the Persian, are full of incredible fictions concerning Alexander, or Iskender, as he is called. In one of these, by Mahmed el Kermanni, Alexander, while prosecuting his conquests on the frontiers of China, encounters a monstrous dragon which had ravaged a whole kingdom; and in an island of the Indian ocean, he sees men with wings, &c. The work of Simeon Seth, compiled from such materials, and filled with arbitrary fictions concerning

[1] Histoire de Roy Alexandre jadis roy et seigneur de tout le monde, et des grandes prouesses qu' il a faites en son temps.

Alexander, was early communicated to the west of Europe by means of a Latin version, which became the foundation of two metrical romances. Of these the first was written in 1184, by Lambert li Cors, with the assistance of Alexander of Paris; a production which has given rise to the name of those lines called Alexandrian, from a false idea that it was the first poem in which that measure was employed. Thomas of Kent is the author of the second metrical romance on the subject of Alexander, which, he says, is taken from the Latin, meaning probably the translation from Simeon Seth. The incidents in the prose romance of Alexander have been compiled from these two metrical works: Its author has chiefly availed himself of the poem of Lambert li Cors; but he has been indebted to the composition of Thomas of Kent for the whole story of Olympia and Nectanebus, which does not occur in the former production.

The date of the prose Alexander is nearly the same with that of the above-mentioned romances of Hercules and Jason, and it was printed towards the close of the 15th century. It is not till the ancient history of Macedon has been detailed, that the author gives the following account of the birth of his hero. Nectanebus, who was an Egyptian king, and a great necromancer,

dreading an attack from the king of Persia, magnanimously embarked for Greece, in the disguise of a priest of Jupiter Ammon. Adorned with the symbols of that divinity, he visited Olympia, queen of Macedon, who, in the absence of her husband, was then residing in a remote castle, and he soon after became the father of Alexander. On the return of Philip, who had been long from home, the queen attributed her suspicious pregnancy to the intervention of Jupiter himself. In confirmation of this, Nectanebus afterwards by his art introduced at court a voluminous, but docile dragon, who saluted the king, and, so far from feeling abashed at the presence of the courtiers, caressed her majesty to the infinite astonishment of Philip and the Macedonians. Nectanebus also insinuated himself into the favour of Philip, and when Alexander grew up was appointed his preceptor. That prince, as he advanced in years, displayed much greatness of mind; but he was diminutive in person, and his head leaned to one side, like that of Nectanebus. Hence the courtiers were wont to remark, that in form he much resembled the priest of Jupiter, but that his soul came from Jupiter himself. The amour of Nectanebus with Olympia has been introduced by Gower into the sixth

book of his Confessio Amantis, as it is related in the romance.

After the death of his father, Alexander, previous to the conquest of Persia, embarked for Italy, subdued Rome, and received tribute from all the European nations. The account of his Persian expedition is somewhat consistent with history, but the most incredible wonders are added to his Indian conquests. Thus Alexander came among a nation who placed their delight in eating human flesh, and made war solely for the purpose of replenishing their Garde-Manger. Having jousted with Porus for his kingdom, and overthrown him, he found in the palace of the vanquished monarch immense treasures, and among other wonders a vine, of which the branches were gold, the leaves emeralds, and the fruit other precious stones; a fiction which seems to have been suggested by the golden vine which Pompey carried away from Jerusalem. One chapter in this part of the work bears the following title, "Comment Alexandre trouva femmes qui tant font gesir les hommes avec elles que l' ame leur part du corps." In a neighbouring district he beheld women, who, after being interred during winter, sprung to life on the approach of summer, with

renovated grace and beauty; or, as it is prettily expressed in the metrical romance of Lambert li Cors,

> Quant l' esté revient, et le beau temps s' espure,
> En guise de fleur blanche reviennent a nature.

Finally, having reached the extremity of the world, having received homage from all nations who inhabit its surface, and being assured that there remained nothing more to conquer, Alexander formed the inconsiderate project of becoming sovereign of the air and deep. By the conjurations of the eastern professors of magic, whom he consulted, he was furnished with a glass cage of enormous dimensions, yoked with eight griffins well matched. Having seated himself in this conveyance, he posted through the empire of the air, accompanied by magicians, who understood the language of birds, and asked at the most intelligent natives the proper questions concerning their laws, manners, and customs, while Alexander received their voluntary submissions. This aërial journey, like most of the fictions concerning Alexander, is of eastern origin. An old Arabian writer, in a book called Malem, informs us that Nimrod being frustrated in his attempt to build the tower of Babel,

insisted on being carried through the air in a cage borne by four monstrous birds (D'Herbelot, Bib. Orient. *Nimrod*). The notion of comprehending the language of birds is also oriental. This faculty was attributed by the eastern nations to Solomon, who, when he travelled on his magic carpet, with his soldiers on his right hand, and on the left the genii, was always attended by flights of birds, which sheltered his army from the sun (Sale's Koran). The idea, however, seems to have passed at an early period into Europe; Gerbert, or Sylvester II., is said to have acquired it while at Seville, from the Moors, and in an old Scandinavian romance, Sigurd attains this accomplishment by supping broth made of the flesh of dragons.

It is impossible to conjecture how high Alexander might have mounted, or what important information he might have derived from the birds, had he not been compelled to descend from the clouds by the *intolerable heat* of these upper regions. On his return from this aërial excursion, he resolved to cool himself, and to ascertain how the great fish behaved to the little ones, by descending to the bottom of the deep in a species of diving-bell. The fish, as he expected, crowded round the machine, and paid him their humblest

homage. It is remarkable that a similar story is mentioned by one of the old Welsh bards, (Davies' Celtic Researches, p. 196,) and Mr Southey, in his notes to Madoc, says, that it was pointed out to him by Mr Coleridge, in one of the most ancient German poems.

When Alexander had received the obeisance of the fish, he returned to Babylon, where he was crowned with due pomp, and mass was performed with proper solemnity. Soon after his coronation he was treacherously poisoned, an event which had been presaged by the salamanders, of which he had found a large supply in the menagerie of the kings of Persia, and had always kept good fires for their subsistence and entertainment. As an acknowledgment for this hospitality they foretold his death, but their prediction did not meet from him the attention which it merited.

The Cyclus of romances relating to classical heroes, of which I have now enumerated the most important, are perhaps chiefly interesting, as having supplied copious materials to our English poets of the earliest school. Adam Davies' Lyfe of Alexander is derived from the metrical romances on that prince's exploits: Lydgate's Troy Book is almost a paraphrase of the chronicle of

Colonna, and many of the stories introduced by Gower in his Confessio Amantis, may be traced to the same origin. Such spurious chronicles, and the romances founded on them, were the primary source of all those metrical compositions enumerated in the *Cursor Mundi*:

> Of Julius Caesar the emperour,
> Of Alexander the conquerour,
> Of Greece and Troy, the strong stryf
> Where many a man lost his lyf.

It was to be expected that the age which exhibited the heroes of Greece as knights errant, should represent the poets and sages of antiquity as necromancers and wizards. Of all distinguished characters, Virgil seems to have fallen most strongly under this suspicion, and the story of his amours and incantations has formed the subject of a very curious romance of chivalry and magic. It has been doubted whether the sorcerer Vergilius was the same with the Roman poet; but it appears from the authors of the 14th and 15th centuries, that such at least was the prevailing opinion in the dark ages. This receives confirmation from the necromancer's connection with Naples, and the castle which he is said to have

possessed in the suburbs of Rome. In the commencement, too, of the romance, Vergilius is unjustly deprived of his inheritance, wherein he is afterwards reinstated by favour of the emperor, which seems to identify him with that poet, who, under the character of Tityrus, has acknowledged his restoration by Augustus to the lands from which he had been driven, in such pathetic bursts of gratitude.

How Virgil acquired the character of an adept in magic, forms a curious subject of inquiry. Naudaeus, in his Apology for great men suspected of practising that art, conceives that the absurd opinions entertained concerning Virgil, originated in the Pharmaceutria of his eighth eclogue, where he hath so learnedly discussed whatever relates to magic—the Vittas molles—verbenas pingues—thura mascula, and

Carmina quae coelo possunt deducere Lunam.

This belief in the magical powers of Virgil may have received confirmation from the sixth book of the Æneid, in which the secrets of the world unknown are so mysteriously revealed :—

Dii, quibus imperium est animarum, umbraeque silentes;
Et Chaos, et Phlegethon, loca nocte silentia late,
Sit mihi fas audita loqui; sit numine vestro
Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas.

In addition to this, nothing more readily conferred the character of a magician than a knowledge of mathematics, a science in which Virgil is said to have made considerable proficiency. The report besides, whether true or false, that Virgil had ordered his books to be burnt, may have created the suspicion, that in these he had disclosed the mysteries of the black art, especially as he lived during the reign of an emperor who ordered all magical works to be destroyed.

In whatever way it may have originated, the belief in the magic powers of Virgil appears to have prevailed as soon as mankind lost the refinement of taste, which enabled them to appreciate his exquisite productions. It may be fairly conjectured, that the notion of several of the necromantic operations, attributed to Virgil, was derived from the east. The leading incident in this romance, of Vergilius releasing the fiend from his state of confinement, and subsequently cheating him into a return to his prison, is familiar to us

from its similarity to the tale, in the 11th and following nights of the Arabian Entertainments, of the Fisherman and Genie, which is said to be still a prevalent eastern superstition. Virgil's intrigue with the soldan's daughter also resembles many of the adventures introduced in oriental romance, and the tales of chivalry derived from the east.

The fictions concerning the magic powers of Virgil were first incorporated about the beginning of the 13th century, in the Otia Imperialia of Gervase of Tilbury, chancellor of the Emperor Otho IV., to whom he presented his extravagant compilation. In this work, which is fraught with incredible fables of every description, we are told that the wise Virgil set up a brazen fly on one of the gates of Naples, which remained there for eight years, and during that period permitted no other fly to enter the city. On another gate he placed two immense images of stone ; one of which was said to be handsome and merry, and its fellow sad and deformed. These images possessed this magic influence, that if any person entering the city came near the former statue, every thing prospered according to his desires, as he who approached the latter was inevitably unfortunate and disappointed. Virgil also made a public fire, where-

at every one might freely warm himself, and near it he placed a brazen archer, with bow and arrows, bearing the inscription,—"If any one strike I will shoot off my arrow:" this at length happened when a certain fool striking the archer, he shot him with his arrow, and sent him into the fire, which was forthwith extinguished. Gervase also informs us, that having visited Naples, he was himself witness to many of these wonders which yet remained, and was informed concerning the others by his host, the Archdeacon Pinatellus, by whom he was entertained in that city.

These fables were transcribed by Helinandus, the monk who was contemporary with Gervase, into his Universal Chronicle, and were also introduced by Alexander Neckam, an English Benedictine, who studied at Paris early in the 13th century, into his work, De Naturis Rerum, (book 6,) with many important additions. In particular, we are told, that Virgil constructed a brazen bridge, which carried him wherever he pleased, and also that he formed those statues, which were called Preservers of Rome; for as soon as any country revolted, or took up arms against the empire, the image representing that nation rung a bell which hung around its neck, and pointed to the inscribed name of the rebellious state. Similar

fables concerning Virgil have been mentioned by Paracelsus, and Gower in his Confessio Amantis, while the stories of the public fire, and the statues, preservers of Rome, have been related at full length in the Seven Wise Masters.

Such works supplied ample materials for the old French romance of Vergilius, of which there are two editions extant, one in 4to., the other 8vo., both printed at Paris, and both without date. That production was the basis of the English Lyfe of Virgilius, which, however, varies in some particulars from its original.

In the commencement of this work, Virgilius is represented as living under the Emperor Persydes, who appears, according to the chronology of the romance, to have reigned soon after the time of Romulus. Virgilius being wise and subtle in his youth, was placed at school, but while there he received more instruction in consequence of a holiday adventure, than he derived from all the lessons of his teachers. While roaming among the hills in the neighbourhood of Tolentum, he perceived and entered a deep hole in the side of one of the highest, and when he had penetrated a considerable way, he heard the voice of a fiend, who entreated that he would deliver him from confinement, by removing a board by which he was spell-

bound. In return for this service he offered him a choice and valuable collection of books on necromancy, which would instruct him in the mysteries of that art. Virgilius having removed the board, the devil came out like an eel, and then stood before him like a big man. Having thus obtained possession of the fiend's library, Virgilius conceived that his property would be more secure if he could again inclose the former owner in the hole from which he had issued. He accordingly defied him to return, and the demon being piqued at the implied doubt of his powers, wrought his way into the hole, where he was immediately shut up by Virgilius placing the board at the aperture, and will in all probability remain imprisoned, since he has irrecoverably lost the literary treasure by which he might again tempt the curious in magic to render him assistance.

It has already been suggested, that this fiction must have been derived from the story near the commencement of the Arabian Entertainments, of a fisherman, who, having cast his nets, drew up a small copper vessel, with a leaden seal on it, which being removed, a thick smoke issued forth, and formed itself into an enormous genie, who threatened to slay his deliverer. The fisherman pretended to disbelieve that he had actually been

confined in the small copper vessel, and adjured him again to enter it that he might be convinced. On this the body of the genie dissolving in mist, made its way into the vessel, in which the fisherman instantly sealed him up with the leaden seal, which had been originally stamped with the signet of Solomon.

In one of the French Fabliaux, entitled Lai d' Hippocrate, (Le Grand, vol. i. p. 232,) there is an absurd story of that physician being pulled half way up a tower in a basket, by a lady of whom he was enamoured, and then left suspended, that he might be exposed to the ridicule of the multitude. A similar story is related of Virgilius on his first arrival at Rome; the romancers and poets of the middle ages taking delight to exhibit the greatest and wisest characters as victims to the power of love.

From gratitude to the emperor, who restored an inheritance of which he had been unjustly deprived, Virgilius constructed for him a palace, in which he saw and heard all that was said or done in every quarter of the city. We are also told how he made an ever-blooming orchard, the statues, called preservers of Rome, already mentioned, and a lamp which lighted the whole city, but which was at length broken, in a manner borrowed

from the story of Gervase of Tilbury, concerning the fire and the archer. There follows the account of his amour with the soldan's daughter, whom he carried off from her father's court, and built for her accommodation the town of Naples, which he founded upon eggs, a tradition which still prevails among the Lazzaroni of that city. He also made a metal serpent in Rome, and whoever put his hand into the serpent's throat was to swear his cause was right and true; and if he took a false oath, the hand was infallibly bitten off. It is curious that at this day there is a chapel at Rome, called Santa Maria, built in the first ages of the church, and which is likewise denominated "Bocca della verita," on account of a large round mask, with an enormous mouth, fixed up in the vestibule. Tradition says, that in former times the Romans, in order to give a more solemn confirmation to oaths, were wont to put their hands into this mouth, and that if a person took a false oath, his hand would have been bitten off. (Kotzebue's Travels in Italy.)

Many other marvellous things were accomplished by Virgilius during his life; but the story of his death is the most singular and interesting part of the romance. As he advanced in life, Virgilius entertained the design of renovating his youth by

force of magic. With this view he constructed a castle without the city, and at the gate of this building he placed twenty-four images, armed with flails, which they incessantly struck, so that no one could approach the entrance unless Virgilius himself arrested their mechanical motion. To this castle the magician secretly repaired, accompanied only by a favourite disciple, whom on their arrival he led into the cellar, and showed him a barrel, and a fair lamp at all seasons burning. He then directed his confident to slay and hew him into small bits, to cut his head into four, to salt the whole, laying the pieces in a certain position in the barrel, and to place the barrel under the lamp; all which being performed, Virgilius asserted that in nine days he would be revived and made young again. The disciple was sorely perplexed by this strange proposal. At last, however, he obeyed the injunctions of his master, and Virgilius was pickled and barrelled up according to the very unusual process which he had directed. Some days after, the emperor missing Virgilius at court, inquired concerning him at the confident, whom he forced, by threats of death, to carry him to the enchanted castle, and to allow his entrance by stopping the motion of the statues which wielded the flails. After a long search the emperor de-

scended to the cellar, where he found the remains of Virgilius in the barrel; and immediately judging that the disciple had murdered his master, he slew him on the spot. And when this was done, a naked child run three times round the barrel, saying, "Cursed be the time that ye came ever here;" and with these words the embryo of the renovated Virgil vanished.

That series of romances in which the heroes and sages of antiquity are represented as knights-errant and sorcerers, forms the last class of tales of chivalry. I had at one time expected to have found a fifth class, relating to the crusades; and surely no subject could have been chosen more adapted to romance than the struggle between Saladin and Richard, both unparalleled in feats of prowess,—the one exhibiting the Saracen character in its highest perfection, and the other that superhuman courage and boundless generosity which constitute the mirror of knighthood. Nothing, however, can be worse founded than the assertion of Warburton and Warton, that after the Holy Wars a new set of champions, conquests, and countries were introduced into romance; and that Solyman, Nouraddin, with the cities of Palestine and Egypt, became the favourite topics. Mr Ritson has justly remarked, that no such

change took place as is pretended; and so far from the Crusades and Holy Land becoming favourite topics, there is not, with the exception of the uninteresting romance of Godfrey of Boulogne, a single tale of chivalry founded on any of these subjects. Perhaps those celebrated expeditions undertaken for the recovery of the Holy Land were too recent, and too much matter of real life, to admit the decorations of fiction. Many of the metrical romances were written in England during the reign of Richard, or in France in the age of St Louis, and were transformed into prose, as we learn from the authors themselves, at the moment when Edward I. embarked for Palestine.

Having therefore now completed the task of furnishing an analysis of the most important prose romances of chivalry that have been given to the world, I shall dismiss the subject by a few remarks on the influence and the decline of that species of composition.

The influence which chivalry for many ages exercised in the modification of manners and customs has been often pointed out, and whatever that effect may have been, it was doubtless heightened by the composition and perusal of romances.

These works arose from a system of manners, and in their turn exercised on manners a recipro-

cal influence. The taste of the age gradually changed from a fondness for monkish miracles to the ready admission of tales, equally eccentric, indeed, and improbable, but not so debasing. The charms of romance roused the dormant powers of the human intellect; gave wings to fancy and warmth to imagination; and, in some degree, kindled a love of glory. They seem also to have inspired a taste for reading; for that these works were much perused, is evident, both from the number that were written, and the many editions that have successively appeared.

Another effect produced by the romances of chivalry, was the communication of beauty and interest to the writings of many illustrious poets, who improved on their machinery, and adopted those tales of wondrous achievement in which the *amantes mira Camoenae* chiefly rejoice. Classical fictions might, like the Grecian architecture, be more elegant than the Gothic, but the productions of the middle ages were more awakening to the fancy and more affecting to the heart. The perilous adventures of the Gothic knights—their high honour, tender gallantry, and solemn superstitions, presented finer scenes and subjects of description, and more interesting displays of affec-

tion—in short, more beauty, variety, and pathos, than had ever yet been unfolded.

Pulci and Boiardo, the earliest romantic poets of Italy, communicated to the tales of chivalry all the embellishments which flow from the charms of versification, and the beauties of an enchanting language. From their example, the fables of romantic fiction became the favourite themes of succeeding poets. The compositions adorned by these splendid miracles were the objects of universal admiration, while the epic poems of Trissino and Alamanni, founded on the classic model, were neglected or despised. Nor can this be wholly attributed to the difference of genius in the poets themselves; for while the other writings of Ariosto sunk into oblivion, his Orlando, according to the expression of his great rival, lives in ever-renovating youth. The genius of Tasso, which hardly rises above mediocrity in tragedy, in pastoral, or in the classical refabrication of the Jerusalem, has reared one of the finest poems in the world on the basis of romantic fiction. "These were the tales," says the biographer of our earliest English poet, "with which the youthful fancy of Chaucer was fed; these were the visionary scenes by which his genius was awakened; these were the acts and personages on which his boyish thoughts were at liber-

ty to ruminate for ever." Many too were the obligations of Spenser to the fables of romance; and even in a later period they nourished the genius of a poet yet more august, who repeatedly bears his testimony of admiration and gratitude to their inspiring influence.—"I will tell you," says Milton, "whither my younger feet wandered: I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood."

A change introduced in the customs and mode of life among the inhabitants of Europe, as it was the principal source of the rise, so it may be also regarded as the chief cause of the decline, of romantic composition. The abolition of chivalry was the innovation which had most effect in this overthrow. However useful that institution might have been in the early stages of society, it was found that in a regular campaign the utmost disorder resulted from an impetuous militia, which knew no laws but those of its courage, which confounded temerity with valour, and was incapable of rallying in the hour of disaster. Vigour of discipline was broken by want of unity of command; for the army was headed by chiefs who had different interests and different motives of action, and who drew not from the same source their claims to obe-

dience. The knights, too, had at all times perverted the purposes of their institution. If we believe the flattering picture given by Colombiere, the errant heroes of chivalry wandered through the world redressing injuries, exterminating the banditti with which Europe was infested, or relieving those ladies who had fallen into the power of enemies. But if we examine other writers, we shall meet with a very different account of these worthies, and shall find, according to the quaint expression of an old English author, that these errant knights were arrant knaves.

Pierre de Blois, who wrote in the 12th century, complains that the horses of the knights were more frequently loaded with implements of gluttony and drunkenness, than with arms fit for battle. "They are burdened," says he, "not with weapons, but wine; not with javelins, but cheeses; not with bludgeons, but bottles; not with spears, but with spits."—Non ferro sed vino, non lanceis sed caseis, non ensibus sed utribus, non hastibus sed verubus onerantur. In France, during the disorders which existed in the reign of Charles VI., the contending factions, with a view to strengthen their interest, multiplied the number of knights, by which means the order was degraded. A new

institution was created by Charles VII., who bestowed on his Gensdarmerie the honours hitherto appropriated to knighthood, and the chivalry of France became anxious to enroll themselves amongst a body wherein they might arrive at military command, which, as simple knights, they could no longer attain. The image and amusements of chivalry now alone remained. Mankind were occasionally reminded of a previous state of society by the exhibition of jousts and tournaments; but even these, in a short while, became unfashionable in France, from the introduction of other amusements, and the accident which terminated the life of one of its monarchs.

The wonders of chivalry had disappeared from real life, but still lingered in the memory of man: new romantic compositions, indeed, no longer were written, but the old ones were still read with avidity, when all the powers of wit and genius were exerted—not, indeed, to ridicule the spirit of chivalry, or a state of society which had passed away, but to satirize the barbarous relaters of chimerical adventures, and those who devoted their time to their perusal.

Some writers have considered the Sir Thopas of Chaucer as a prelude to the work of Cervantes. It may be much to the honour of the English poet

that he so early discerned and ridiculed the absurdities of his contemporary romancers, but it cannot be conceived that Sir Thopas had any effect in discrediting their compositions. It appeared in a reign which almost realized the wonders of romantic fiction, and at a period when the spirit of chivalry possessed too firm hold of the mind to suffer the love of the marvellous to be easily eradicated. The satire, besides, was infinitely too recondite to have been detected in that age; what was meant as burlesque was probably considered as a grave heroic narrative,—a supposition which must have been strengthened from the author having, in another composition, adopted the extravagancies which he is supposed to deride. In Don Quixote, on the contrary, the satire was too broad to be mistaken, and appeared when the spirit of chivalry was nearly abated. The old romancers had outraged all verisimilitude in their extravagant pictures of chivalry, and as their successors found that the taste of the public was beginning to pall, they sought to give an interest to their compositions by descriptions of more impossible valour and more incredible absurdity. Accordingly the evil began to cure itself, and the phantoms of knight-errantry were laughed out of countenance by the ridicule of Cervantes before

their substance had been presented, at least in a prose composition, by any author of genius.

I do not believe that the prevalence of the heroic, or pastoral romances, had much effect in discrediting the tales of chivalry: these new fictions rather arose in consequence of a decline of the taste for the old works, and the stagnation of amusement which followed; but it is probable they were, in some measure, overshaded by the growth of other branches of literature. The study of the classics introduced method into composition, and the ambition of rivalling these new patterns of excellence produced imitation. Fancy was curbed by reflection, and rules of criticism intimidated the bold eccentricities of romantic genius. Besides, the Gothic fables were superseded by the general diffusion of the works of the Italian novelists in France and England, and the numerous translations and imitations of them in both countries. The alternate pictures of ingenious gallantry and savage revenge, which these exhibit, produced a taste in reading, which, when once formed, could not easily have been recalled to a relish for the delights of romance. These tales form an extensive and interesting department of fiction, and their origin and progress will be the subject of our first inquiries in the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER VII.

Origin of Italian Tales.—Fables of Bidpai.—Seven Wise Masters.—Gesta Romanorum.—Contes et Fabliaux.—Cento Novelle Antiche.—Decameron of Boccaccio.

It seems not a little remarkable that Italy, which produced the earliest and finest specimens of romantic poetry, should scarcely have furnished a single prose romance of chivalry. This is the more remarkable, as the Italians seem to have been soon and intimately acquainted with the works of the latter description produced among the neighbouring nations. Nor does this knowledge appear merely from the poems of Pulci and Boiardo, but from authors during a period still more remote, in whom we meet with innumerable allusions to incidents related in the tales of chivalry. Dante represents the perusal of the story of Lancelot, as

conducting Paolo and Francesca *al doloroso passo* (Inf. c. 5), and elsewhere shows his acquaintance with the fabulous stories of Arthur and Charlemagne (Inf. c. 31 and 32, Parad. c. 16 and 18). Petrarch also appears to have been familiar with the exploits of Tristan and Lancelot (Trionfi, &c.) In the Cento Novelle Antiche there exists the story of King Meliadus and the Knight without Fear; as also of the Lady of Scalot, who died for love of Lancelot du Lac. There, too, the passion of Yseult and the phrensy of Tristan are recorded; and in the sixth tale of the tenth day of the Decameron, we are told that a Florentine gentleman had two daughters, one of whom was called Gineura the Handsome, and the other Yseult the Fair.

Nevertheless the Italians have produced no original prose work of any length or reputation in the romantic style of composition. This deficiency may be partly attributed to national manners and circumstances. Since the transference of the seat of the Roman empire to Constantinople, the Italians had never been conquerors, but had always been vanquished by barbarous nations, who were successively softened and polished at the same time that they became enervated. The inhabitants possessed neither that extravagant courage nor re-

fined gallantry, the delineation of which forms the soul of romantic composition. At a time when, in other countries, national exploits, and the progress of feudal institutions, were laying the foundation for this species of fiction, Italy was over-run by the incursions of enemies, or only successfully defended by strangers. Hence it was difficult to chuse any set of heroes, by the celebration of whose deeds the whole nation would have been interested or flattered, as England must have been by the relation of the achievements of Arthur, or France by the history of Charlemagne. The fame of Belisarius was indeed illustrious, but as an enemy he was hated by the descendants of the northern invaders; and, as a foreigner, his deeds could not gratify the national vanity of those he came to succour. His successor's exploits were liable to the same objections, and were besides performed by a being of all others the worst calculated to become a hero in a romance of chivalry.

The early division, too, of Italy into a number of small and independent states, was a check on national pride. A theme could hardly have been chosen which would have met with general applause, and the exploits of the chiefs of one district would often have been a mortifying tale to the inhabitants of another.

Besides, the mercantile habits so early introduced into Italy repressed a romantic spirit. It is evident from the Italian novelists, that the manners of the people had not catched one spark of the fire of chivalry, which kindled the surrounding nations. In the principal states of Italy, particularly Florence, the military profession was rather accounted degrading than honourable, during an age when, in every other country of Europe, the deference paid to personal strength and valour was at the highest. The Italian republics, indeed, were not destitute of political firmness, but their martial spirit had forsaken them, and their liberties were confided to the protection of mercenary bands.

Add to this, that at the time when France and England were principally engaged with compositions of chivalry, and when all the literary talent in these countries was exerted in that department, the attention paid in Italy to classical literature introduced a correctness of taste and fondness for regularity, which was hostile to the wildness and extravagance of the tales of chivalry.

At the same period, the three most distinguished and earliest geniuses of Italy were employed in giving stability to modes of composition at total variance with the romantic. Those who were ac-

customed to regard the writings of Dante and Petrarch as standards of excellence, would not readily have bestowed their approbation on Tristan, or the Sons of Aymon. But the Decameron of Boccaccio was probably the work which, in this respect, had the strongest influence. The tales it comprehends were extremely popular; they gave rise to early and numerous imitations, and were of a nature the best calculated to check the current of romantic ideas.

Since then, in the regions of Italian fiction, we shall no longer meet with fabulous histories, resembling those of which such numerous specimens have already been presented, it will now be proper to give some account of the endless variety of tales, or *Novelettes*, which were coeval with the appearance of romances of chivalry in France and England, and which form so popular and so extensive a branch of Italian literature.

It may be interesting, in the first place, to trace the origin of this species of composition, in the tales which preceded the Decameron of Boccaccio. These were adapted to the amusement of infant society, but are interesting in some degree, as unfolding the manners of the age, and exhibiting the rude materials of more perfect composition.

Before mankind comprehend the subtilties of reasoning, or turn on themselves the powers of reflection, they are entertained, and may be instructed, by the relation of incidents imaginary or real. Hence, in almost every country, tales have been the amusement and learning of its rude and early ages.

Of the variety of tales which are to be found in the works of the Italian novelists, some were undoubtedly deduced from the writings of the Greek romancers and sophists. In the Habrocomas and Anthia of Xenophon Ephesius, we find the rudiments ot the celebrated tale of Luigi da Porto, from which Shakspeare took his Romeo and Juliet, and many of the apologues in Josaphat and Barlaam correspond with chapters in the Gesta Romanorum, and through that performance with stories in the Decameron. The epistles of Aristenetus contain several tales very much in the spirit of those of Boccaccio. Thus, a lady, while engaged with a gallant, suddenly hears her husband approaching; she instantly ties the hands of her lover, and delivers him thus bound to her spouse as a thief she had just seized. The husband proposes putting him to death, to which the lady objects, suggesting that it will be better to detain him till day-break, and then deliver him into the hands of

the magistrate, offering at the same time to watch him during night. By this means, while her husband is asleep, she enjoys a little more of the society of her lover, and permits him to escape towards morning. In the Ass of Apuleius, resemblances may be traced still more numerous and complete. But though it be true that these works had an influence on the tales which appeared in Europe at the first dawn of literature, the ultimate origin of this species of composition must unquestionably be referred to a source more ancient and oriental.

The earliest work of this nature that can be mentioned, is the tales or fables attributed to Bidpai, or Pilpay, a composition otherwise known by the name of

KALILAH U DAMNAH.

This production, which, in its original form, is supposed to be upwards of two thousand years old, was first written in an Indian language, in which the work was called Heetopades (wholesome instruction), and the sage who related the stories, Veshnoo Sarma. It is said to have been long preserved with great care and secrecy by an Indian

monarch, among his choicest treasures. At length, however, (as we are informed by Simeon Seth, in the preface to his Greek version of these stories,) Chosroes, a Persian king, who reigned about the end of the 6th century, sent a learned physician into India, on purpose to obtain the Hectopades. This emissary accomplished the object of the mission, by bribing an Indian sage with a promise of intoxication, to steal the literary treasure. The physician, on his return to Persia, translated it into the language of his own country, and in the frame in which it was introduced, attributed the relation of the stories to Bidpai. It was soon after translated into Syriac, and oftner than once into more modern Persic. In the 8th century there appeared an Arabic version, under the title, Kalilah u Damnah, the appellation by which the work is now generally known, and which is derived from the names assigned to two foxes, who relate a number of the stories; the one term signifying worthy to be crowned, and the other ambitious. About the year 1100, Simeon Seth, by desire of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, translated the Arabic version into Greek, under the title, Τὰ κατὰ στεφανίτην, καὶ ἰχνηκατην, of the crowned and the envious. The philosopher who relates the stories is not named in this version. It is divided into fifteen

sections, in the two first of which the foxes are the principal interlocutors, but the remaining thirteen refer to other animals. The work of Simeon Seth was printed at Berlin, 1697, with a Latin version. Long before that period, however, the Kalilah u Damnah had been translated into Latin by John of Capua, who lived as far back as the 13th century. This version was made from one in Hebrew, by Rabbi Joel, and was printed toward the end of the 15th century, under the title, Directorium Humanæ Vitæ, vel Parabole Antiquorum Sapientum. Thence it passed into German, Spanish, and Italian. The Italian translation was the work of the novelist Firenzuola, and was called Discorsi Degli Animali, and published 1548. A version in the same tongue, by Doni, was translated into English, under the name of the Moral Philosophy of Doni, out of Italian, by Sir Thomas North, 4to, 1570 and 1601. From the Latin of John of Capua, there also appeared a French edition in 1698. It was from a Turkish model, however, written in the time of Solyman the Magnificent, that the well-known French work, Contes et Fables Indiennes de Bidpai et Lockman, 1724, was commenced by M. Galland, and continued by M. de Cardonne. If we may judge, however, from the title, it was not completed according to the in-

tention of the authors, as there are no fables given which are attributed to Lockman. This work was translated into English 1747.

In all the versions the tales are enclosed in a frame, a mode of composition subsequently adopted in many writings of a similar description. We are told that a powerful king, after being tired one day with the chase, came, accompanied by his vizier, to a place of retreat and refreshment. Here the prince and his minister enter into a discourse on human life and government, a conversation which seems to have been suggested by a swarm of bees, which were at labour in the trunk of a neighbouring oak. During this discussion, the vizier mentions the story of Bidpai, and the Indian king who ruled according to his counsels. This frame is not believed to be more ancient than the Turkish version; but the story of Bidpai, which the king expresses a curiosity to hear, is supposed to be as old as the earliest Persian translation, and is of the following tenor:—Dabchelim, the Indian king, after a feast in which his liberality had been much commended by all his guests, made a great distribution of gold among his friends and the poor. In the course of the following night, an old man appeared to him in a dream, and, as a reward of his generosity, informed him where he

would find a treasure. Next morning the king proceeded to the spot to which he had been directed. There he found a cavern inhabited by a hermit, who put him in possession of an immense treasure he had inherited from his father, but for which he had no farther use. Among other articles, the king received a precious casket, containing a piece of silk, woven with certain characters, which, however, had the inconvenience of being unintelligible. When at length interpreted by a philosopher, it was found to be a legacy from a prophetic predecessor of Dabchelim, and to contain fourteen pieces of instruction for monarchs. Each of these is declared to have reference to a surprising history, but it is announced, that he who is desirous to hear must repair to the isle of Sarandib (Ceylon.) The king being disposed to undertake this journey, and the viziers being against it, a discussion arises, in which all attempt to support their own sentiments, by the relation of fables. His majesty at length, as was to be expected, followed his own opinion, and after a long journey arrived at the island of Sarandib. While traversing a lofty, but delightful mountain, he came to a grotto which was inhabited by the Bramin Bidpai. This was the sage destined to expound the mysterious precepts which the king now recited to him,

and which teach that a monarch is apt to be imposed on by detractors, that he ought to be careful not to lose a faithful friend, &c. These maxims the sage illustrates by fables and apologues, which, it may be remarked, have seldom much relation to the instructions of which Dabchelim required an explanation.—Stories are heaped on stories, and sphered within each other: a dying father, for example, gives some admonitions to his sons, which he enforces by apologues; but his family, seeing matters in a different point of view, support their opinions in the same manner, and introduce the two foxes, who rehearse a long series of fables.

It is unnecessary to give any specimen of the tales of Bidpai, as they have been so much altered in the various transformations they have undergone, that no dependence could be had on their originality. But it must have been through the medium of the version of John of Capua, that these oriental fables exercised their influence on European fiction. Some of these stories agree with the Clericalis Disciplina of Petrus Alphonsus, and many of them have been adopted into the Gesta Romanorum, a great storehouse of the Italian novelists. The tale of the thief who breaks his neck by catching at a ray of the moon, occurs in the

Gesta and the French Fabliaux. But I remember only one Italian novel, the incidents of which have been derived from this work, and it is but in a very few stories of the Kalilah u Damnah, that any resemblance can be traced. They are mostly fables in the style of Æsop, and have but few traces of the ingenious gallantry, savage atrocity, or lively repartee, which are the characteristics of Italian tales. Besides, as the work was not very widely diffused, nor generally known in Europe in the 13th or 14th centuries, I cannot believe that it had much effect, either directly or indirectly, on this species of composition.

The collection of tales, familiarly known in this country under name of the

SEVEN WISE MASTERS,

is certainly one of those works which may be considered as having had considerable influence on the writings of the Italian novelists, and may perhaps be regarded as the remotest origin of the materials they have employed.

Of this romance the prototype is believed to have been the book of the Seven counsellors, or

Parables of Sandabar. This Sandabar is said, by an Arabian writer, to have been an Indian philosopher, who lived about an hundred years before the Christian era; but it has been disputed whether he was the author, or only the chief character, of the work, which was inscribed with his name. He might have been both a character and an author, but it would appear from a note in a Hebrew imitation, preserved in the British Museum, that he was at all events a principal character; "Sandabar iste erat princeps sapientum Brachmanorum Indiae, et magnam habet partem in tota hac historia." This Hebrew version is the oldest form in which the work is now extant. It was translated into that language, as we are informed in a Latin note on the manuscript, by Rabbi Joel, from the original Indian, through the medium of the Arabic or Persian.[1]

In point of antiquity, the second version of the parables, is that which appeared in Greek, under the title of Syntipas, of which many MSS. are still extant. Some of these profess to be translated from the Persian, and others from the Syriac language, so that the real original of the Greek translation cannot be precisely ascertained.

[1] Ellis's Early Metrical Romances, vol. III.

The next appearance was in Latin, a work which is only known through the French metrical version of it, entitled Dolopatos. This was the first modern shape it assumed, after having passed through all the ancient languages. Dolopatos was brought to light by Fauchet, who, in his account of the early French poets, ascribes it to Hebers, or Herbers, an ecclesiastic who lived during the reign of Lewis IX., as he informs us that it was written for the instruction of that monarch's son, Philip, afterwards called Philip the Hardy. Of this version there is a MS. copy in the national library at Paris.

In the same library there is preserved another French MS., by an anonymous author, which was written soon after that of Hebers, but differs from it essentially, both in the frame and in the stories introduced. This work gave rise to many subsequent imitations in French prose, and to the English metrical romance, entitled the Process of the Seven Sages, which is preserved among the MSS. of the Cotton library, and of which an account has been given by Mr Ellis, who supposes it to have been written about the year 1330.

Not long after the invention of printing, the Latin Historia Septem Sapientum, a different version

from that on which the Dolopatos of Hebers is founded, was printed at Cologne, and translations of it soon appeared in almost all the languages of Europe. It was published in English prose, under the title of the Seven Wise Masters, about the middle of the 16th century, and in Scotch metre by John Rolland, of Dalkeith, about the same period.

The last European translation belongs to the Italians, and was first printed at Mantua, in 1546, under the title of Erastus. It is very different from the Greek original, and was translated, with the alterations it had received, into French, under the title Histoire Pitoyable du Prince Erastus, 1565, and the History of Prince Erastus, &c., was also printed in English in 1674.

This romance, through most of its transmigrations, exhibits the story of a king who places his son under the charge of one or more philosophers. After the period of tuition is completed, the wise men, when about to re-conduct their pupil to his father, discover by their skill, that his life will be endangered unless he preserve a strict silence for a certain time. The prince being cautioned on this subject, the monarch is enraged at the obstinate taciturnity of his son. At length one

of his queens undertakes to discover the cause of this silence, but, during an interview with the prince, seizes the opportunity of attempting to seduce him to her embraces. Forgetting the injunctions of his preceptors, the youth reproaches her for her conduct, but then becomes mute as before. She, in revenge, accuses him to her husband, of the offence of which she had herself been guilty. The king resolves on the execution of his son, but the philosophers endeavour to dissuade him from this rash act, by each relating one or more stories, illustrative of the risks of inconsiderate punishment, which are answered by an equal number on the part of her majesty.

Such is the outline of the frame, but the stories are often different in the versions. Indeed, there is but one tale in the modern Erastus, which occurs in the Greek Syntipas. The characters, too, in the frames, are always different; thus, in the Greek version, Cyrus is the king, and Syntipas the tutor. In Dolopatos, a Sicilian monarch of that name is the king; the young prince is called Lucinien, and Virgil is the philosopher to whose care he is entrusted. Vespasian, son of Mathusalem, is the emperor in the coeval French version, and the wise men are Cato, Jesse, Lentulus, &c.

The author of the English metrical romance has substituted Diocletian as the emperor, and Florentin as the son. Diocletian is preserved in the Italian copies, but the prince's name is changed into Erastus. In some of the eastern versions, the days, in place of seven, have been multiplied into forty; and in this form the story of the Wise Masters became the origin of the Turkish tales, published in France, under the title of L'Histoire de la Sultane de Perse et des quarante Visirs.

Few works are more interesting and curious than the Seven Wise Masters, in illustrating the genealogy of fiction, or its rapid and almost unaccountable transition from one country to another. The leading incident of a disappointed woman, accusing the object of her passion of attempting the crime she had herself meditated, is as old as the story of Joseph, and may thence be traced through the fables of mythology to the Italian novelists. In the Arabian Nights Entertainments, the Husband and Peacock is the same with the Magpie of the Wise Masters. The story of the Father murdered by his son was originally told by Herodotus, of the architect and his son who broke into the treasury of the king of Egypt, and has been imitated in many Italian tales. The Wi-

dow who was comforted, is the Ephesian matron of Petronius Arbiter, and the Two dreams corresponds exactly with the plot of the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus, the Fabliau Le Chevalier a la Trappe, (Le Grand, 3, 157,) a tale in the fourth part of Massuccio; and the story Du Vieux Calender in Gueulette's Contes Tartares. Finally, the Knight and his Greyhound resembles the celebrated Welch tradition concerning Llewellyn the Great and his greyhound Gellert: the only difference, is that in the former production the dog preserves his master's child by killing a serpent, while, according to the Welch tradition, it is a wolf he destroys. In both, the parents seeing the faithful animal covered with blood, believe that he has torn the child to pieces, and sacrifice him to their resentment.

Next to the Seven Wise Masters may be mentioned the tales of Petrus Alphonsus, a converted Jew, who was godson to Alphonsus I., king of Arragon, and was baptized in the beginning of the twelfth century. These stories are professedly borrowed from Arabian fabulists. They are upwards of thirty in number, and consist of examples intended to illustrate the admonitions of a father to a son. The work was written in

Latin, and was entitled Alphonsus de Clericali Disciplina. But the Latin copy only supplies twenty-six stories. The remainder are to be found in two metrical French versions, one entitled "Proverbes de Peres Anforse;" and the other "Le Romaunz de Peres Aunfour, comment l aprist et chastia son fils belement."

A few of these stories are precisely in the style of gallantry, painted by the Italian novelists. Thus the eighth tale is that of a vine-dresser, who wounds one of his eyes while working in his vineyard. Meanwhile his wife was occupied with her gallant. On the husband's return, she contrives her lover's escape by kissing her spouse on the other eye. Of this story, as we shall afterwards find, there is a close imitation in the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, the 6th of the tales of the queen of Navarre, and the 23d of the first part of Bandello. The 9th story of Petrus Alphonsus is that of an artful old woman, who conceals her daughter's gallant from the husband, by spreading a sheet before his eyes, in such a manner as to give the lover an opportunity of escaping unseen: this is the 122d chapter of the Gesta Romanorum, and is also to be found in the Fabliaux published by Le Grand. Many other tales occur in Petrus Al-

phonsus, in which there is not merely a resemblance in manner, but in which the particular incidents, as shall be afterwards shown, are the same with those in the Cento Novelle Antiche, and the Decameron of Boccaccio.

Perhaps neither the author of the Cento Novelle Antiche, nor the subsequent Italian novelists, derived stories directly from the Seven Wise Masters, or the tales of Alphonsus; but these works suggested many things to the writers of the French Fabliaux, and a still greater number have been transferred into the

GESTA ROMANORUM,

which is believed to be a principal store-house of the Italian novelists.

This composition, in the disguise of romantic fiction, presents us with classical stories, Arabian apologues, and monkish legends.

Mr Douce has shown that there are two works entitled Gesta Romanorum, and which, strictly speaking, should be considered as separate performances. The first and original Gesta was written in Latin, on the continent. It was not transla-

ted into English till 1703, but has been repeatedly printed, though no MS. of it has yet been brought to light.

The second work, in its earliest shape, is also in the Latin language, but was written in England, in imitation of the continental Gesta above-mentioned. It was never published in its original form, but an English translation was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and a subsequent edition appeared in 1595. There are extant, however, a number of MS. copies in Latin, which Mr Douce says led Warton to imagine that the two Gestas were the same, and to remark, that there is a great variation in the printed and MS. copies of the Gesta Romanorum.[1] The work written in England, consists of 102 chapters, of which forty are of the same nature with the stories in the continental

[1] In fact, however, the two Gestas may just as well be considered the same work as the different versions of the Wise Masters, or of the Kalilah u Damnah. The term, Gesta Romanorum, implies nothing more than a collection of ancient stories, many of which might be the same, but which would naturally vary in various countries, according to the taste of the collector, in the same manners as different stories are introduced in the Greek Syntipas, the Italian Erastus, and English Wise Masters.

Gesta,—an inoculation of feudal manners and eastern imagery, on the exploits of classical heroes: but the remainder are somewhat different. The stories in the Anglican Gesta were well known to our early poets, who made much use of them. Among these tales we find the story of Lear, and the Jew in the Merchant of Venice. Some of them also correspond with the works of the Italian novelists: but the original Gesta is the one to which they were indebted, and which therefore at present is alone deserving of our attention.

This work is attributed by Warton to Petrus Berchorius, or Pierre Bercheur, who was prior of a Benedictine convent at Paris, and died in 1362. The composition of the Gesta has been assigned by Warton to this monk, on the authority of Salomon Glassius, a theologist of Saxe Gotha, who points him out as the author in his Philologiae Sacrae, and Warton attempts to fortify his assertion by the similarity of the style and execution of the Gesta, to works unquestionably written by Berchorius. Glassius, whose information is derived from Salmeron, says "hoc in studio excelluit quidam Petrus Berchorius Pictaviensis, ordinis D. Benedicti, qui peculiari libro Gesta Romanorum, nec non legendas Patrum, aliasque ani-

les Fabulas allegorice et mystice exposuit. Exempla adducit dicto loco Salmero," (viz. T. 1 proleg. 16. car 21.) Glassius then quotes from Salmeron, the story of St Bernard and the Gambler, which corresponds with the 170th chapter of most editions of the Gesta Romanorum; so that we have at least the authority of Salmeron, that Berchorius was the author. Mr Douce, however, is of opinion, that the Gesta Romanorum is not the production of Berchorius, but of a German, as a number of German names of dogs occur in one of the chapters, and many of the stories are extracted from German authors, as Cesarius, Albert of Stade, &c., which Mr Warton, on the other hand, supposes to have been interpolated by some German editor, or printer.

Whoever may have been the author of the Gesta, it is pretty well ascertained to have been written about the year 1340, and thus had time to become a fashionable work before 1358, the year in which Boccaccio is supposed to have completed his Decameron. The earliest edition, though without date, is known to have been prior to 1473. It consists of a hundred and fifty-two chapters, and is thus announced,—" Incipiunt Historiae Notabiles, collectae ex Gestis Romanorum et

quibusdam aliis libris, cum applicationibus eorundem." A subsequent edition, containing a hundred and eighty-one chapters, was published in 1475, and was followed by many translations, and about thirty Latin editions, most of which preserved the number of a hundred and eighty-one chapters. That printed in 1488 is the most approved.

The Gesta, as is well known, presents us with the manners of chivalry, with spiritual legends, and eastern apologues, in the garb of Roman story. It appears to have been compiled in the first place from Arabian fables, found in the tales of Alphonsus; and an old Latin translation of the Kalilah u Damnah, to which Alphonsus was indebted. Indeed, not less than a third of the tales of Alphonsus have been transferred to the Gesta Romanorum. In the next place, the author seems chiefly to have had recourse to obsolete Latin chronicles, which he embellished with legends of the saints, the apologues in the history of Josaphat and Barlaam, and the romantic inventions of his age. The latter classics also, as Valerius Maximus, Macrobius, &c., are frequently quoted as authorities. Sometimes, too, the author cites the Gesta Romanorum, the title of his own work, by

which he is not understood to mean any preceding compilation of that name, but the Roman, or rather ancient history in general.

The contents of this collection are not such as might be expected, from its name or the authorities adduced. It comprehends a multitude of stories altogether fictitious, and which are total misrepresentations of Roman history: the incidents are described as happening to Roman knights or under the reign of Roman emperors, who, generally, never existed, and who seldom, even when real characters, had any connection with the circumstances of the narrative. To each tale or chapter, a moral is added, in which some precept is deduced from the incidents, an example which has been followed by Boccaccio, and many of his imitators. The time in which the Gesta appeared was an age of mystery, and every thing was supposed to contain a double or secondary meaning. At length the history of former periods, and the fictions of the classics, were attempted to be explained in an allegorical manner. Acteon, torn to pieces by his own hounds, was a symbol of the persecution of our Saviour. This gave rise to compositions like the Romaunt of the Rose, which were professedly allegorical; and to the practice adopted

by Tasso and other Italian poets, of apologizing for the wildness of their romantic compositions, by pretending to have accommodated them to certain remote analogies of morality and religion.[1]

Almost every tale in the Gesta Romanorum is of importance in illustrating the genealogy of fiction, and the incorporation of eastern fable and Gothic institutions with classical story. There are few of the chapters in which the heroes of antiquity, feudal manners, and oriental imagery have been more jumbled than in the first. Pompey has a daughter whose chamber is guarded by five armed knights and a dog. Being on one occasion al-

[1] Luther, in a curious passage in his Commentary on Genesis, (cap. 30,) attributes the origin of this practice to the monks, and it would appear that it had been derived by them from the east. "In Turcia," says he, "multi religiosi sunt, qui id student ut Alcoranum Mahometi interpretentur allegorice, quo in majore estimatione sint. Est enim Allegoria tanquam *formosa meretrix*, quae ita blanditur hominibus, *ut non possit non amari*, praesertim ab hominibus ociosis, qui sunt sine tentatione. Tales putant se in medio Paradisi et in gremio Dei esse, si quando illis speculationibus indulgent. Et primum quidem a stolidis et ociosis monachis ortae sunt, et tandem ita late serpserunt ut quidam Metamorphosin Ovidii in allegorias verterint; Mariam fecerunt Laurum, Apollinem Christum. Ego itaque odi allegorias. Si quis tamen volet iis uti, videat cum judicio eas tractet."

lowed to attend a public spectacle, she is seduced by a duke, who is afterwards killed by a champion of Pompey's court. She is subsequently reconciled to her father, and betrothed to a nobleman. On this occasion she receives from Pompey an embroidered robe, and crown of gold—from the champion who had slain her seducer a gold ring —a similar present from the wise man who had pacified her father, and from her spouse a seal of gold. All these presents possessed singular virtues, and were inscribed with proverbial sentences, suitable to the circumstances of the princess.

The Gesta Romanorum, too, had a powerful influence on English poetry, and has afforded a variety of adventures not merely to Gower, and Lydgate, and Chaucer, but to their most recent successors. Parnell, in his Hermit, has only embellished the eightieth chapter by poetical colouring, and a happier arrangement of incidents.

It is chiefly, however, as having furnished materials to the Italian novelists, that the Gesta has been here so particularly mentioned. In the 56th chapter we find the rudiments of those stories of savage revenge, of which there are some examples in Boccaccio, and which is carried to such extravagance by Cinthio, and subsequent Italian novelists. A merchant is magnificently enter-

tained in a nobleman's castle. During supper the guest is placed next the hostess, and is much struck with her beauty. The table is covered with the richest dainties, served in golden dishes, while a pittance of meat is placed before the lady in a human skull. At night the merchant is conducted to a sumptuous chamber. When left alone, he observes a glimmering lamp in a corner of the room, by which he discovers two dead bodies hung up by the arms. In the morning he is informed by the nobleman, that the skull which had been placed before the lady, was that of a duke he had detected in her embraces, and whose head he had cut off with his own sword. As a memorial of her crime, and to teach his wife modest behaviour, her adulterer's skull had been converted into a trencher.[1] The corses in the chamber, continued he, are those of my kinsmen, murdered by the sons of the duke. To keep up my sense of revenge for their blood, I visit their dead bodies daily. It is not explained, however, why this dismal apartment was assigned to the stranger. This

[1] Ma foi (says the queen of Navarre,) si toutes celles a qui pareille chose est arrivée buvoient a de semblables vaisseaux, Je crains fort qu' il y auroit bien des coupes de vermeil qui deviendroient tetes de morts.

story occurs in more than one of the romantic poems of Italy. It is also the plot of an old Italian tragedy, written by Ruccellai, and has been imitated by many subsequent writers,—in the 32d tale of the Queen of Navarre, in Gower's Confessio Amantis, and in the German ballad of Count Stolberg. Such atrocious fictions, however, were not peculiar to the middle ages, but had their model in classic fable,—in the revenge of Progne, and the banquet of Atreus.

A few of the Italian tales are founded on, or embellished by, magical operations. The story of Sultan Saladin, one of the most beautiful in the Decameron, and also that of the magician who raises up a blooming garden in the depth of winter, are of this description. Now a great proportion of the stories in the Gesta Romanorum are of this nature also. Thus chapter 102 contains the story of a knight who went to Palestine, and whose lady, meanwhile, engaged in an intrigue with a clerk. Her infidelity was discovered to her absent husband by an eastern magician, by means of a polished mirror. Stories of this sort were common both in romance and tradition. It is said that during the earl of Surrey's travels in Italy, Cornelius Agrippa showed him in a looking-glass his mistress Geraldine. She was represented as indis-

posed, and reclined on a couch, reading her lover's verses by the light of a waxen taper.[1] In Spenser's Faery Queen, Merlin is feigned to have been the artificer of an enchanted mirror, in which a damsel viewed the shadow of her lover.

There is also a magical story in chapter 107, entitled De Imagine cum digito dicente, percute hic. It is told that there was an image in the city of Rome, with its right hand stretched forth, on the middle finger of which was written, "Strike here." For a long time no one could understand the meaning of this mysterious inscription. At length a certain subtle clerk, who came to see this famous image, observed, while the sun shone against it at mid-day, the shadow of the inscribed finger on the ground at some distance. He immediately took a spade, began to dig on that spot, and at last reached a flight of steps, which descended far under ground, and led him to a stately palace. In a hall of this edifice he beheld a king and queen sitting at table, surrounded by their nobles and a multitude of people, all clothed in rich garments—but no person spoke. He looked towards one corner, where he saw an immense carbuncle, which

[1] See Lay of the Last Minstrel, C. 6.

illuminated the whole apartment. In the opposite corner he perceived the figure of a man with a bended bow, and an arrow in his hand, prepared to shoot; on his forehead was written, "I am who I am; nothing can escape my dart, not even yonder carbuncle which shines so bright." The clerk viewed all with amazement. Entering another chamber, he beheld the most beautiful women working at the loom: but all was silence. He then went into a stable full of the most excellent horses, richly caparisoned: but those he touched were instantly turned into stone. Next he surveyed all the apartments of the palace, which apparently abounded with every thing he could desire; but on returning to the hall he had first entered, he began to reflect how to retrace his steps. Then he very justly conjectured that his report of all these wonders would hardly be believed unless he carried something back with him as evidence. He therefore took from the principal table a golden cup and a golden knife, and placed them in his bosom. On this the image, which stood in the corner with the bow and arrow, immediately shot at the carbuncle, which was shattered into a thousand pieces. At that moment the hall became black as night. In this darkness the clerk, not

being able to find his way out, remained in the subterraneous palace, and soon suffered a miserable death. All this is, of course, moralized; the palace is the world—the figure with the bow is mortality—and the carbuncle human life. William of Malmesbury is the first writer by whom this story was recorded: he relates a similar tale of Pope Gerbert, or Sylvester the Second, who died in the year 1003, and was the earliest European student of Arabic learning.

In their obvious meaning, it is probable that these magical tales, which are evidently borrowed from the East, suggested to the Italian novelists the enchantments with which their works are occasionally embellished.

It must, however, be remarked, that the Gesta Romanorum supplies few of those tales of criminal yet ingenious gallantry which appear in all the Italian novelists, and occupy more than a third part of the Decameron. Indeed, I have observed but two stories of this description in the Gesta, chapters 121 and 122, both of which are taken from Petrus Alphonsus. (See above, p. 168.) The origin of tales of this nature must therefore chiefly be sought in the

CONTES ET FABLIAUX.

France, in a literary point of view, may be considered as divided into two parts during the 12th and 13th centuries.

Soon after Gaul had been subdued by the Romans, the vanquished nation almost universally adopted the language of the victors, as generally happens when conquerors are farther advanced in civilization than the people they have overcome. During many centuries Latin continued the sole or prevalent tongue, but on the inroads of the Franks and other tribes it became gradually corrupted. From these innovations two languages were formed, both of which were called Romaine, or Romance, from Latin still continuing the principal ingredient in their composition. About the ninth century these dialects began to supersede Latin as a colloquial tongue, in the different districts of France in which they were spoken. One species of Romance was used in those French provinces which lie to the south of the river Loire, and from the circumstance of the inhabitants of that country using the word *oc* as their affirmative, it was called *Langue d'oc*. The

sister dialect, which was spoken to the north of the river Loire, received the name of *Lang' d'oil*, from the term *oil* being the affirmation of the northern provinces. It is from this latter idiom that the modern French language has been chiefly formed. The southern romance was something between French and Italian, or rather French and Spanish.

It is not my intention, nor indeed is it connected with my subject, to enter into the dispute concerning the dialect to which the French nation has been indebted for the earliest specimens of metrical composition, and whether the northern Trouveurs, or Troubadours of the south, are best entitled to be regarded as the fathers of its poetry. This question, which is involved in much obscurity, has never been very profoundly agitated, and its full discussion would require, from the innumerable MSS. that must be perused, a time and attention which few have inclination to bestow.

Versifiers, however, seem to have made an early appearance both in the northern and southern regions of France. A large proportion of the latter district was possessed by Raimond IV. count of Provence. All his dominions, in consequence, received the name of Provence; the southern Romance, or Langue d'oc, was called the Provençal

language, and the versifiers who composed in it the Provençal poets. They also distinguished themselves by the name of Troubadours, or Inventors, an appellation, corresponding to the title of poet, which was assigned to all those who wrote in Provençal rhyme, whether of the southern provinces of France, of the north of Italy, or Catalonia.

The Provençal poets, or Troubadours, have been acknowledged as the masters of the early Italian poets, and have been raised to perhaps unmerited celebrity by the imposing panegyrics of Dante and Petrarch. The profession of the Troubadours existed with reputation from the middle of the 12th to the middle of the 14th century. Their compositions contain violent satires against the clergy, absurd didactic poems, moral songs versified from the works of Boethius, and insipid pastorals. But they were principally occupied with amorous compositions, and abstruse speculations on the nature of love. It was in the *Tensons*, or pleas before the celebrated tribunals in which amatory questions were agitated, that they chiefly attempted to signalize themselves. These *tensons* were dialogues in alternate couplets, in which they sustained their various speculative opinions.

In the works of the Troubadours, however, we can hardly trace any rudiments of those tales,

either of horror or gallantry, which became so prevalent among the Italians. Millot's literary history of the Troubadours presents us with only two stories which have any resemblance to the Italian novels of gallantry. In one of these, by Raimond Vidal, we are told that a lord of Arragon, who was a jealous husband, pretended to take his departure on a journey, but suddenly returned, and introduced himself to his wife in disguise of the knight whom he suspected as her lover. The lady recognises her husband, but pretends to be deceived, and, after shutting him up, goes to find her lover; and, moved with indignation at the prying disposition of her lord, grants the knight what she had hitherto refused him. Next morning she assembles her servants to take vengeance, as she gives out, on a vassal who had made an attempt on her virtue; the husband is thus beat in the place of his confinement by his own domestics, but is at length recognised, and obtains pardon on vowing thenceforward unbounded confidence in his wife. The second story is by Arnauld de Carcasses. A knight dispatches his parrot to a lady with a declaration of his passion: but though the fair one accepts the offer of his heart, the lover is much embarrassed to devise any mode of procuring an interview. The bird hits on an expedient, which is to set fire

to her castle, in hopes that the lady might escape to her lover in the confusion which would result from the conflagration. This project the parrot executes in person, by means of some wild-fire which he carries in his claws. As was expected, the lady elopes, proceeds straightway to the rendezvous, and ever after holds the winged incendiary in high estimation. Four other tales have been reckoned up by the historians of the Troubadours, but none of these can be properly regarded as tales, being merely intended as introductions to the discussion of some knotty love question, which generally forms the longest part of the composition.

It is then in the Langue d'oil, or northern romance alone, that we must look for those ample materials which have enriched the works of the Italian novelists. This dialect, we have seen, superseded the Latin as a colloquial language in the beginning of the ninth century. Its uniformity was early destroyed by the Norman invasion, which occasioned the division of the *romance* into a number of different idioms. To the conquerors, however, from whom it suffered corruption, it was also indebted for restoration. These invaders had no sooner fairly settled in their acquired territories, than they cultivated, with the utmost care,

the language of the vanquished. Under their government it found an asylum, and was by them diffused in its purity through all the northern provinces of France.

Latin, however, long continued the language of the schools, the monasteries, and judicial proceedings; and it was not till the middle of the 11th century that the *Romance* came to be used in written compositions. It was originally employed in metrical productions: lives of the saints, with devotional and moral treatises in rhime, are the first specimens of this tongue; of the minor compositions, the earliest seem to have been military songs, of which the most celebrated was the Chanson de Rolland, the subject of so much controversy. There were also a few satirical and encomiastic songs, and during the twelfth century a good number of an amatory description, filled with tiresome gallantry, whining supplications, and perpetual complaints against evil speakers. We likewise find a few Jeux parties, which were questions of amorous jurisprudence, corresponding to the *tensons* of the Troubadours, as whether one would prefer seeing his mistress dead or married to another. Such questions being often decided by the poet contrary to the opinion of his audience, were referred to the Court of Love, a tribunal which

certainly existed in the north of France, though it never acquired the same celebrity as in the southern provinces.

It is believed, however, that no professed work of fiction appeared in the Romance language previous to the middle of the 12th century. I shall not here resume what has been formerly said on the origin of romances of chivalry, of which, it has already been shown, we must seek for the first rudiments in the Langue d'oil, as spoken in the north of France and in the court of England. Nor shall I enter into the dispute whether the earliest work of fiction was in the form of a metrical romance, or of those celebrated tales known by the name of Fabliaux.

These stories are almost the exclusive property of the provinces which lie north from the Loire; they are the chief boast of the literature of France during this remote period, and are well deserving of attention, whether we consider their intrinsic merit, or their general influence on fiction.

Of these tales, some have been called Lais, and others Fabliaux; terms which are often used so indiscriminately, that it is not easy to give any definition to distinguish them. The Lai appears, in general, to have been the recital of an action, with more or less intrigue, but, according to Le

Grand, differed from the Fabliau by being interspersed with musical interludes. Mr Ellis suspects that what were called lays, were translations from the Breton dialect, Laoi being a Welsh and Armorican word. Others have supposed that lays were always of a melancholy nature. This is denied by Mr Tyrwhitt, who defines the lay, I think pretty accurately, to be a light narrative poem of moderate length, simple style, and easy measure, neither extended in incidents, as the romance, nor ludicrous, as is usually the case in the Fabliaux. In the old translation of Lai le Fraine, the author of which must have been better informed than any modern writer, it is said that lays were originally from Britany, but that they were composed on all subjects:—

> Some beth of war, and some of woe,
> And some of joy and mirth also,
> And some of treachery and of guile,
> Of old adventures that fell while,
> And some of bourdes and ribauldry,
> And many there beth of Faery;
> Of all things that men seth,
> Most of love, forsooth, there beth:
> In Bretanie, of old time,
> These lays were wrought, so seth this rhyme.

With the exception of Aucassin and Nicolette, which consists of prose and verse intermingled.

the Fabliaux are all metrical, and are, for the most part, in couplets of eight syllables.

These compositions were written by persons styling themselves Trouveurs, a term expressive of genius and invention, corresponding to the Poet of Greece, and the Troubadour of the south of France. The period of the appearance of their works extends through the last half of the 12th the whole of the 13th, and part of the 14th century, but the greatest number were written during the reign of St Louis. Thus the æra of the composition of the Gesta Romanorum is subsequent to that of a large proportion of the Fabliaux. It is not likely, however, that the Trouveurs, or authors of the Gesta, copied from each other; they more probably borrowed from the same sources of fable. Like the stories in the Gesta, a great number of the Fabliaux seem to have been of eastern origin. Many of them are evidently taken from Petrus Alphonsus, who was merely a collector of Arabian tales of instruction; and others are apparently derived from the same nation, as they correspond with stories in the Arabian Nights, and with the Bahar Danush, or Garden of Knowledge, a work which, though of recent compilation, is founded on the most ancient Brahmin traditions, which had gradually spread through Persia and

Arabia. For a long period a constant devotional, as well as commercial, intercourse had subsisted between Europe and the Saracen dominions. In Christendom, indeed, the Mahometans were ever detested, but it was not always the same in Asia. During intervals of peace in time of the crusades, the enemies were frequently united by alliances, the celebration of festivals, and all the appearances of cordial friendship. The tales which were of such antiquity in the East, and were there held in so high estimation, were eagerly seized by the Trouveurs who had wandered to the Holy Land, and were communicated to those who remained behind by report of the Jews, or the hordes who had visited Palestine as pilgrims or soldiers. Even in his own country the Trouveur passed an idle and a wandering life. He was freely admitted to the castle of the baron, yet associated with the lowest *Villains*. Hence he was placed in circumstances of all others most favourable for collecting the anecdotes and scandal of the day. These he combined, arranged, and embellished according to his own fancy, and dressed up in the form which he supposed would be most acceptable to his audience. At this period the nobility lived retired in their own fortresses, and only met at certain times, and on solemn festivals: on these

occasions part of the amusement of the company had been to listen to the recital of metrical romances. But these poems being generally too long to be heard out at once, the Fabliaux, which were short and lively, were substituted in their room, and were frequently recited by the itinerant Trouveurs, as we learn from one of their number, in return for the lodging and entertainment they received:—

> Usage est en Normandie,
> Que qui herbegiez est, qu' il die
> Fable ou chanson a l' hoste.
>
> *Sacristain de Cluni.*

The Trouveur, or Fabler, also frequently wrote his metrical productions with the intention that they should be chaunted or declaimed. As the imperfection of measure required the assistance of song, and even of musical instruments, the minstrel, or *histrion*, added the charms of music to the compositions of the Trouveur. The aids of gesture and pantomime, too, were thought necessary to relieve the monotony of recitation; hence the jongleur, or juggler, a kind of vaulter and buffoon, associated himself with the Trouveur and minstrel, and performing many marvellous feats of dexterity, accompanied them in their wandering

from castle to castle for the entertainment of the barons. At length, however, the professions of Trouveur and minstrel became, in a great measure, blended, as the minstrel, by degrees, formed new combinations from the materials in his possession, and at last produced fictions of his own. "This," says Mr Ellis, "was the most splendid æra of the history of the minstrels, and comprehends the end of the 12th and the whole of the 13th century."

The works of the Trouveurs and minstrels, however popular at the time, and however much they contributed to the entertainment of an audience, were forgotten soon after their composition, and have but lately become a subject of attention. While the Troubadours obtained a lasting reputation by the gratitude of the early Italian poets, and were believed great geniuses because celebrated by Dante and Petrarch, the metrical compositions of the Trouveurs were forgotten, as Boccaccio and his followers did not acknowledge their obligations. Owing to the early neglect of their works, little can be known concerning the personal history of the innumerable authors of these rhymes, for no one, of course, thought of collecting notices of their lives at the only time when it could have been effected. The names, however, of a

great number of them have been mentioned in their tales, and the appellation at the same time frequently points out the country of the poet. Jean de Boves, Gaurin or Guerin, and Rutebeuf, seem to be those who have written the greatest number of stories, and those, at the same time, whose compositions bear the closest resemblance to the Italian novels.

Fauchet, in his history of French poetry, was the first to renew a recollection of the Trouveurs and their writings, but his notices and extracts were not calculated to awaken curiosity. About the middle of last century, the Count de Caylus wrote a memoir on the Fabliaux, accompanied by some specimens and prose translations, which is inserted in the twentieth volume of the Memoirs of the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres. M. Barbazan also published a number of Fabliaux in their original form, (a collection recently enlarged by M. Meon,) but as they were followed by a very imperfect glossary, they could not be read but with the utmost difficulty. About the same time M. Imbert imitated some of the most entertaining in modern French verse. At length M. Le Grand, with indefatigable assiduity, published neither a free nor literal translation, but what he terms a *copie reduite* in French

prose, of a large, and I have no doubt, a judicious selection, which he made from the Fabliaux he found in manuscripts belonging to M. de St Palaye, and which were copies that celebrated author had procured from the library of the Abbey Saint Germain des Prés, Berne, Turin, and other places. In the course of his labours, Le Grand frequently found that pieces with the same title differed in particular incidents, and sometimes in the whole story. Sometimes again the story was the same and the language different, which shows that the Fabliaux were altered at pleasure, either by the minstrel, when given him to set to music by the Trouveurs, or by the transcribers who collected them. These variations Le Grand has frequently mingled, inserting in the version he principally followed any amusing incident, or instructive passage, which he found in the others, and to the whole he has added curious notes, tending to elucidate the manners and private life of the French nation during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The Fabliaux, as far as can be judged from the works of Barbazan and Le Grand, are interesting on their own account, as they, in some degree, show how much the human mind, by its own force, is able to accomplish, unguided by the aids of learn-

ing or the rules of criticism. In them, too, the customs and characters and spirit of the people, are painted in the truest and most lively manner. Resembling, in some degree, a comedy in their nature, they represent the ordinary actions of private life, and exhibit the nation, according to the expression of Le Grand, in an undress. "Opinions," continues that author, "prejudices, superstitions, tone of conversation, and manner of courtship, are to be found in them, and a number of these no where else. They are like certain pictures, of which the subject and the characters are imagined by the artist, but where all besides is truth and nature. In some respects the Fabliaux possess a great advantage over romances of chivalry. The authors of the latter compositions assumed a certain number of knights, to whom, according to the spirit of the age, they assigned certain exploits, but they were limited to one sort of action. On the other hand, the Trouveurs were confined, perhaps, as to the extent, but not the species of their productions. Hence their delineations and characters have little resemblance to each other, and there are none of those endless repetitions, nor relation of incidents, accessory to the principal subject, which are so tiresome in romances of chivalry. The Fabliaux are also free from the ridiculous osten-

tation of learning, and those anachronisms and blunders in geography, so frequent in the fabulous histories of Arthur and Charlemagne. Add to this a simple and ingenious mode of narrative, representations of the human heart wonderfully just, and, above all, the honest simplicity of the relater, who appears convinced of what he recounts, the effect of which is persuasion, because in the midst of improbabilities he seems incapable of deceit."

These beauties are, however, counterbalanced by numerous defects. The fictions of the Trouveurs are sometimes extravagant, and their moral frequently scandalous; not merely that the expressions are blameable, which may be attributed to the rudeness of the age, or imperfection of language, but some stories are in their substance reprehensible. A few of these also are put into the mouth of women, and even the lips of a father in instructions to his daughters.

With such excellencies and defects, it is not surprising that the Fabliaux were often imitated in their own country. Some of them have been frequently modernised in French verse, and have formed subjects for the drama, as Moliere's Medecin Malgre Lui, which is from the Fabliau Le Medicin de Brai, ou le Villain devenu Medicin, a

story which is also told by Grotius ; several scenes of the Malade Imaginaire are from the Fabliau of the Bourse pleine de sens. The Huitre of Boileau is from Les trois dames qui trouverent un anel, and Rabelais appears to have been indebted for his Tirades on *Papelards, membrer remembrer, &c.*, to the Fabliaux of Sainte Leocade and Charlot le Juif.

It is by the Italian novelists, however, that the Fabliaux have been chiefly imitated ; and it is singular, considering the time that elapsed before they passed the Alps, the progress of literature in Italy during the interval, and the genius employed in imitation, that their faults should have been so little remedied, and their beauties so little embellished. Their licentiousness has been increased, and hardly any thing has been added to the interest or variety of the subjects.

That they were imitated by the Italian novelists is a point that can admit of no doubt, even laying aside instances of particular plagiarism, and attending to the general manner of the Fabliaux.

Of the tricks played by one person to another, so common in Italian tales, there are many instances in the tales of the Trouveurs. Thus in a Fabliau by the Trouveur Courte Barbe, a young ecclesiastic returning from his studies (which he

had been prosecuting at Paris) to Compiegne, met on the way three blind men seeking alms. Here, said he, pretending to give them something, is a *besant;* you will take care to divide it equally, it is intended for you all three. Though no one got the money, each believed that his comrade had received it, and, after loading their imagined benefactor with the accustomed blessings, they all went on their way rejoicing; the churchman following at a short distance to watch the issue of the adventure. They proceeded to a tavern in Compiegne, where they resolved to have a carousal, and ordered every thing of the first quality, in the tone of men who derived confidence from the weight of their purse. The ecclesiastic, who entered the house along with them, saw that the mendicants had a plenteous dinner, of which they partook, laughing, singing, drinking to each other's health, and cracking jokes on the simplicity of the good gentleman who had procured them this entertainment, and who was all the while within hearing of the merriment. Their mirth was prolonged till the night was far advanced, when they concluded this jovial day by retiring to rest. Next morning the host made out a bill. 'Get us change for a besant,' exclaim the blind. The landlord holds out his hand to receive it, and

as no person gives it, he asks who of the three is pay-master? Every one says, 'It is not I.' From a corner of the room the ecclesiastic enjoys the rage of the landlord, and mutual reproaches of the blind, who accuse each other of purloining the money, proceed from words to blows, and throw the house into confusion and uproar. They at length are pacified, and suffered to depart on the churchman undertaking to pay their bill, of which he afterwards ingeniously finds means to defraud the landlord.

In the Italian novels there are frequently related stratagems to procure provisions, and pork seems always to have been held in the highest estimation. In like manner, in the Fabliau Des Trois Larrons, by Jehan de Boves, there is detailed the endless ingenuity of two robbers to deprive their brother Travers, who had separated himself from them, and become an honest man, of a pig he had just killed, and also the address with which it is repeatedly recovered by the owner. The thieves had seen the pig one day when on a visit to their brother, and Travers, suspecting their intentions, hid it under a bread oven at the end of the room. At night, when the rogues, with the view of purloining the pig, came to the place where they had seen it hanging, they found nothing but the string

by which it had been suspended. Travers, hearing a noise, goes out to see that his stable and barn are secure. One of the thieves who takes this opportunity to pick the lock of the door, approaches the bed where his brother's wife lay, and counterfeiting the voice of her husband, asks if she remembered where he had hung the pig. 'Don't you recollect,' said she instantly, 'that we put it below the oven?' Having got this information, the thief immediately runs off with the pig on his shoulders; and Travers returning nearly at the same time, is laughed at by his wife for his want of memory. He instantly perceives what had happened, and sets out full speed after his brothers, who had taken a bye path leading to the wood where they intended to hide their booty. Travers comes up with him who carried the pig, and who was a little behind the other. 'It is now time,' says Travers, assuming his brother's voice, 'that I should carry the load.' The bearer instantly accedes to this proposal, but he has not gone on a hundred paces till he overtakes his other brother, when, perceiving that he had been ensnared, he strips himself and puts on a woman's night-cap. In this dress he gets to his brother's house before him, meets him at the door, and, appearing as his wife, exclaims in a feigned voice,

'You have got the pig! give it me, and run to the stable, for I fear they are breaking in.' On his return, Travers discovers from his wife, still lamenting the loss of their pig, that he had been again cheated. He sets out after the pilferers, and comes to a place in the wood where they were dressing the pork at the foot of an oak, by a fire they had just lighted. Travers strips himself, climbs the tree, and, swinging on one of the branches, exclaims in the voice of their father, who had been hanged, 'Wretches, you will end like me.' Hearing this, the thieves run off in the utmost consternation, and leave the pig at the disposal of their brother. Immediately on his return home, the proper owner, to prevent farther accidents, begins to bake it in a pie, but soon perceives it proceeding up the chimney, appended to pieces of wood. The thieves, having recovered from their fright, had come back to the house of Travers, and seeing, by a hole in the wall, that there was now no time to be lost, were trying this last expedient from the roof of the dwelling. They are now invited by their kinsman to descend, and partake of the pye along with him. Accordingly they all sit down to table, and are cordially reconciled. These two specimens that have been given are, I think, quite in the spirit of the Ita-

lian novels, and as good tricks as those in the Decameron which are practised on Calandrino by his brother artists. (See N. 3 and 6, Day 8, &c.)

In the Fabliaux, too, there are innumerable instances of ingenious gallantry, and deceptions practised on husbands, precisely in the style of the Italian novelists, as La Femme qui fit trois fois le tour des murs de l'Eglise, where a woman, detected out of doors at night, persuades her husband she had been recommended to walk three times round the walls of the church, in order to have children : see also La Robbe d'Ecarlate, (Le Grand, vol. ii. p. 265,) and La Culotte des Cordeliers (vol. i. p. 299.) In the Lai du prisonnier (iv. 126,) where twelve ladies partake of the heart of a lover who had deceived them all, we have an exaggerated instance of that mixture of horror and gallantry which prevails, in some degree, in the Decameron, and more strongly in the imitations of the work of Boccaccio. The monastic orders are not so s verely treated as by that author and his successors, but the priests are frequently satirized, and are made the principal actors, in a great proportion of the most licentious stories, as Constant du Hamel, La Longue Nuit, Le Boucher d'Abbeville, Le Pretre crucifié, and Le Pauvre Clerc, which last is the origin of the Freirs of Berwick,

attributed to Dunbar, and the well-known story of The Monk and Miller's Wife.

We have, besides, a series of stories in the Fabliaux in which ludicrous incidents occur with dead bodies, which also became a favourite subject in Italy. There is not, however, in the whole Italian novels, so good a story of this description as that of Les Trois Bossus, by the Trouveur Durant.

Gentlemen, says the author, if you chuse to listen I will recount to you an adventure which once happened in a castle, which stood on the bank of a river, near a bridge, and at a short distance from a town, of which I forget the name, but which we may suppose to be Douai. The master of this castle was humpbacked. Nature had exhausted her ingenuity in the formation of his whimsical figure. In place of understanding she had given him an immense head, which nevertheless was lost between his two shoulders, he had thick hair, a short neck, and a horrible visage.

Spite of his deformity, this bugbear bethought himself of falling in love with a beautiful young woman, the daughter of a poor but respectable burgess of Douai. He sought her in marriage and as he was the richest person in the district,

the poor girl was delivered up to him. After the nuptials he was as much to pity as she, for, being devoured by jealousy, he had no tranquillity night nor day, but went prying and rambling every where, and suffered no stranger to enter the castle.

One day, during the Christmas festival, while standing sentinel at his gate, he was accosted by three humpbacked minstrels. They saluted him as a brother, as such asked him for refreshments, and at the same time, to establish the fraternity, they ostentatiously displayed their humps. Contrary to expectation, he conducted them to his kitchen, gave them a capon with some peas, and to each a piece of money over and above. Before their departure, however, he warned them never to return, on pain of being thrown into the river.

At this threat of the *Chatelain*, the minstrels laughed heartily, and took the road to the town, singing in full chorus, and dancing in a grotesque manner, in derision. He, on his part, without paying farther attention to them, went to walk in the fields.

The lady, who saw her husband cross the bridge, and had heard the minstrels, called them back to amuse her. They had not been long returned to the castle when her husband knocked at the gate,

by which she and the minstrels were equally alarmed. Fortunately the lady perceived on a bedstead, in a neighbouring room, three empty coffers. Into each of these she stuffed a minstrel, shut the covers, and then opened the gate to her husband. He had only come back to spy the conduct of his wife as usual, and after a short stay went out anew, at which you may believe his wife was not dissatisfied. She instantly ran to the coffers to release the prisoners, for night was approaching, and her husband would not probably be long absent. But what was her dismay when she found them all three suffocated! Lamentation, however, was useless. The main object now was to get rid of the dead bodies, and she had not a moment to lose.

She ran then to the gate, and seeing a peasant go by, she offered him a reward of thirty livres, and leading him into the castle, she took him to one of the coffers, and showing him its contents, told him he must throw the dead body into the river; he asked for a sack, put the carcase into it, pitched it over the bridge into the stream, and then returned quite out of breath to claim the promised reward.

'I certainly intended to satisfy you,' said the lady, 'but you ought first to fulfil the conditions

of the bargain—you have agreed to rid me of the dead body, have you not? There, however, it is still;' saying this, she showed him the other coffer in which the second humpbacked minstrel had expired. At this sight the clown is perfectly confounded—how the devil! come back! a sorcerer! —he then stuffed the body into the sack, and threw it like the other over the bridge, taking care to put the head down, and to observe that it sunk.

Meanwhile the lady had again changed the position of the coffers, so that the third was now in the place which had been successively occupied by the two others. When the peasant returned, she showed him the remaining dead body—'you are right, friend,' said she, 'he must be a magician, for there he is again.' The rustic gnashed his teeth with rage—'what the devil! am I to do nothing but carry about this accursed humpback?' He then lifted him up with dreadful imprecations, and, having tied a stone round the neck, threw him into the middle of the current, threatening, if he came out a third time, to despatch him with a cudgel.

The first object that presented itself to the clown, on his way back for the reward, was the

hunchbacked master of the castle, returning from his evening walk, and making towards the gate. At this sight the peasant could no longer restrain his fury—'Dog of a humpback, are you there again!'— So saying, he sprung on the *Chatelain*, stuffed him into the sack, and threw him headlong into the river after the minstrels.

'I'll venture a wager you have not seen him this last time,' said the peasant, entering the room where the lady was seated. She answered that she had not: 'yet you were not far from it,' replied he; 'the sorcerer was already at the gate, but I have taken care of him—be at your ease—he will not come back now.'

The lady instantly comprehended what had occurred, and recompensed the peasant with much satisfaction.

'I conclude from this adventure,' says the Trouveur, 'that money can do every thing.—It is in vain that a woman is fair—God would in vain exhaust all his power in forming her—if you have money she may be yours—witness the humpbacked chatelain in this fabliau.' The Trouveur concludes with imprecations on the precious metals, and those who first used them, which was probably meant as an indirect hint to his audience.

This story is in the Nights of Straparola, and the Tartar Tales, by Gueulette, under the title, Les Trois Bossus de Damas.[1]

Thus, even by attending to the general spirit of the Fabliaux, independent of examples of direct plagiarism, there can, I think, be no doubt that they were the principal models of the Italian tales. In writing, as in conversation, a story seldom passes from one to another, without receiving some embellishment or alteration: The imitators may have filled up the general outline with colours of their own; they may have exercised their ingenuity in varying the drapery, in combining the groups, and forming them into more regular and animated pictures; but there is scarcely an Italian delineation, unless it represent some real incident, of which a sketch more or less perfect may not be seen in the Fabliaux. Instances, in which the Trouveurs have been absolutely copied, or closely followed, will be adduced, when we come to specify the works of their imitators.

It is not easy to point out precisely in what way

[1] The story of the little Hunchback, in the Arabian Nights, is probably the first origin of this tale; but the immediate original is one which occurs in some versions of the Seven Wise Masters.

the Fabliaux passed into Italy, or at what period they were first known beyond the Alps.

Since the progress of romantic fiction, however, has in many instances been clearly traced from the north to the south of Europe, from Asia to the western extremity of Christendom, and from the classical times of Greece, through the long course of the dark ages to the present period, it will not appear extraordinary that the Italians should have imbibed the fables of their neighbours and contemporaries. During the civil dissensions which were so long protracted in Italy, many of its inhabitants sought refuge in France. A great number of the usurers established in that country were of the Lombard nation. Part of the interior commerce of France was carried on by Italians, and they occupied a whole street in Paris, which was called that of the Lombards. The court of Rome, too, employed in France a number of Italian agents, to support the rights and collect the revenues of the church. Brunetto Latini wrote at Paris his Tesoro, and many Venetians went to study law in that capital. On the other hand, during the same period, the French, as is well known, frequently resorted to the different states of Italy, in the course of war or political intrigue. The French minstrels also frequently wandered be-

yond the Alps, bearing with them their Lais and their Fabliaux. Muratori (Dissert. Antichit. Ital. tom. ii. c. 29.) reports an ordinance of the municipal officers of Bologna, issued in 1288, prohibiting the French minstrels from blocking up the streets by exercising their art in public.—" Ut Cantatores Francigenorum in plateis communibus ad cantandum morari non possunt."

There are many imitations of the tales of the Trouveurs in the

CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE,

commonly called in Italy Il Novellino, the first regular work of the class with which we are now engaged that appeared in Europe; its composition being unquestionably prior to that of the Decameron of Boccaccio.

It is evident, from the title of the Cento Novelle *Antiche*, that it was not a new and original production, but a compilation of stories already current in the world. The collection was made towards the end of the 13th century, and was formed from episodes in romances of chivalry; the Fabliaux of the French Trouveurs; the ancient chronicles of Italy; recent incidents; or jests and

repartees current by oral tradition. That the stories derived from these sources were compiled by different authors, is apparent from the great variety of style; but who these authors were is still a problem in the literary annals of Italy. A number of them were long supposed to have been the work of Dante and Brunetto Latini, but this belief seems to rest on no very solid foundation. Quadrio, however, considers these tales as the production of a single writer, whom he hails as the unknown father of the Italian language:—"L' autor di quest' opera è incerto; è pero autore di lengua."

At first the Cento Novelle Antiche amounted only to ninety-six, but four were afterwards added to make up the hundred. The original number remained in MS. upwards of two centuries from the date of their composition. They were at length edited by Gualteruzzi, at Bologna, 1525, and were entitled Le Ciento Novelle Antike, on the frontispiece; and within—"Fiori di parlare, di belle cortesie, e di belle valentie e doni, secondo ke per lo tempo passato anno fatto molti valenti uomini." This edition was published from a MS. belonging to Cardinal Bembo, and which had just before been copied from the original MS. Gualteruzzi certainly conceived his edition to be the first, but Apostolo Zeno thinks that another, of which he

had seen a copy at Padua, without date of year or place, is more ancient. Yet one would suppose that had an earlier edition existed, Gualteruzzi could not have been ignorant of the fact, nor would Bembo, whatever may be the value of an original MS., have procured a recent transcript, when an elegant impression was circulating through the world. A subsequent edition by the Giunti appeared at Florence, in 1572, and one still more recently at Naples, which is not held in much estimation. Some tales occur in one of these editions which are not found in another; and the stories are also differently arranged, which is extremely troublesome in reference.

The stories contained in the Cento Novelle Antiche, though not very interesting from intrinsic merit, have become so as being the commencement of a series of compositions which obtained the greatest celebrity, and, by their influence on the English drama, laid the foundation of the most splendid efforts of human genius. It may, therefore, be proper to give a few examples, that the reader may appreciate the taste and spirit in which the Cento Novelle were written.

2. Is the story of a Greek king who detained one of the most learned of his subjects in confinement. A handsome Spanish horse being brought

to court, as a present to the monarch, and the prisoner being interrogated as to its value, replies, that it is indeed a fine horse, but had been suckled by an ass. This fact is verified by sending to Spain, where it is discovered that the mare had died soon after producing the foal; on which the prisoner receives from the king, as a reward, an additional allowance of bread. On another occasion he acquaints his majesty, that there is a worm in one of his most precious jewels. The gem being dashed to pieces, the animal is found, and the captive gratified with a whole loaf each day. At length the king says to him, Whose son am I? He is answered, that he sprung from a baker; a piece of unexpected intelligence, which is confirmed by the queen-mother on her being sent for, and compelled by threats to confess the truth. Being finally asked how he came to know all these things, the wise man replies, that the length of the horse's ears, and the heat of the gem, had suggested his two first answers, and that he had discovered his majesty's pedigree from the nature of the rewards he had repeatedly assigned him. This tale has a striking resemblance to that of the Three Sharpers and the Sultan, which is the second story of the recent addition to the Arabian Tales published by Mr Scott. Three sharpers in-

troduce themselves to a sultan, the first as a skilful lapidary, the second as expert in the pedigree of horses, and the third as a genealogist. The sultan wishing to try their veracity, detains them in confinement, and after a while sends for the first to demand his opinion of a precious stone, which had been lately presented to him; when the sharper, having examined it, declares there is a flaw in its centre, and the jewel being cut in two, the blemish is discovered. He then informs the sultan that he had discerned the defect by the acuteness of his sight; and as a reward receives a mess of pottage and two cakes of bread. Some time after a beautiful black colt arrives, as a tribute from one of the provinces. The genealogist of horses being thereon summoned, affirms that the colt's dam was of a buffalo species, which is found to be correct on examining the person who had brought him. Having received the same recompense as his fellow-prisoner, the third sharper is now interrogated as to the parentage of the sultan himself, whom he pronounces to be the offspring of a cook, as his gratuities consisted in provisions from his kitchen, instead of the honours which it is customary for princes to bestow. This being confirmed by the confession of the sultan's mother, he abdicates the throne in favour of the genealogist, and

conscientiously wanders through the world in disguise of a dervise. The first story in Mr Scott's publication, the Sultan of Yemen and his Three Sons, has also a considerable resemblance to this tale. There the three princes find out that a kid at table had been suckled by a bitch, and that the sultan at whose court they were was the son of a cook. Similar to these is the anecdote related of Virgil and Augustus. While the poet acted as one of the emperor's grooms, a colt of wonderful beauty was sent in a gift to Cæsar. Virgil decided that it was of a diseased mare, and would neither be strong nor swift, and this opinion having proved correct, Augustus ordered his allowance of bread to be doubled. On another occasion, the emperor, who doubted his being the son of Octavius, having consulted Virgil on his pedigree, is told that he sprung from a baker; a conjecture which had been formed from the nature of his rewards.

6. Is from the 8th chapter of the Gesta Romanorum, where the Emperor Leo commands three statues of females to be made; one has a gold ring on a finger, pointing forward; another the ornament of a golden beard! the third a golden cloak and purple tunic; whoever should steal any of these ornaments was to be punished by an ig-

nominious death. See Gower's Confessio Amantis (lib. 5).

30. Story of the Sheep passing a River, from the 11th tale of Petrus Alphonsus. This stupid story has been introduced in Don Quixote, where it is related by Sancho to his master. (Part I. b. iii. c. 6.)

39. A person having offended certain ladies by his lampoons, and being about to receive the severest of all punishments, saves himself by exclaiming, that she who is most deserving of the satire should commence the attack. In Fauchet, a similar story is related of Jean de Meun, author of the continuation of the Romaunt of the Rose; but as the Romaunt was not finished till the year 1300, this tale is probably taken from one in the Fabliaux (Le Grand, 4, 126), where a knight disarms the fury of a number of jealous women, by bidding her strike first who had loved him most. There is a similar story adopted in one of the romantic poems of Italy, I think the Orlando Innamorato, where a knight escapes from a like situation, by inviting her to the attack who has least regard to her own and husband's honour. A like expedient is resorted to by the hero of the Italian comic romance, Vita di Bertoldo. All these stories probably had their origin in the

expression by which our Saviour protected the woman taken in adultery.

Many of the Cento Novelle are merely classical fictions.

43. Is the fable of Narcissus. We have also the story of Diogenes, requesting Alexander to stand from betwixt him and the sun; and of the friends of Seneca, who, while lamenting that he should die innocent, are asked by the philosopher if they would have him die guilty; an anecdote usually related of Socrates.

50. Is from chapter 157 of the Gesta Romanorum. A porter at a gate of Rome taxes all deformed persons entering the city. The 5th of Alphonsus is also a story of this nature, where a porter, as a reward, has liberty to demand a penny from every person one-eyed, humpbacked, or otherwise deformed. A blind man refusing to pay, is found on farther examination to be humpbacked, and, beginning to defend himself, displays two crooked arms; he next tries to escape by flight; his hat falls off, and he is discovered to be leprous. When overtaken and knocked down, he appears moreover to be afflicted with hernia, and is amerced in fivepence.

51. Saladin's Installation to the Order of Knighthood: An abridgment of a Fabliau, called L'Ordre de Chevalerie, (Le Grand, 1. 140).

56. The Story of the Widow of Ephesus, which was originally written by Petronius Arbiter, but probably came to the author of the Cento Novelle Antiche through the medium of the Seven Wise Masters, or the Fabliau De la Femme qui se fist Putain sur la fosse de son mari. (See above, vol. I. p. 126.)

68. An envious knight is jealous of the favour a young man enjoys with the king. As a friend, he bids the youth hold back his head while serving this prince, who, he says, was disgusted with his bad breath, and then acquaints his master that the page did so, from being offended with his majesty's breath. The irascible monarch forthwith orders his kiln-man to throw the first messenger he sends to him into the furnace, and the young man is accordingly despatched on some pretended errand, but happily passing near a monastery on his way, tarries for some time to hear mass. Meanwhile, the contriver of the fraud, impatient to learn the success of his stratagem, sets out for the house of the kiln-man, and arrives before his intended victim. On inquiring if the commands of his master have been fulfilled, he is answered that they will be immediately executed, and, as the first messenger on the part of the sovereign, is forthwith thrown into the furnace.

This tale is copied from one of the Contes Devots, intended to exemplify the happy effects that result from hearing mass, and entitled, D'un Roi qui voulut faire bruler le fils de son Seneschal. It is also chapter 95 of the Anglican Gesta Romanorum.

A few tales seem to have had their origin in romances of chivalry; the

81. Is the Story of the Lady of Scalot, who died for love of Lancelot du Lac; and another is the Story of King Meliadus and the Knight without Fear.

82. Outline of the Pardonere's Tale in Chaucer.

A few of the Cento Novelle are fables. Thus in

91. The mule pretends that his name is written on the hoof of his hind-foot. The wolf attempts to read it, and the mule gives him a kick on the forehead, which kills him on the spot. On this the fox, who was present, observes, "Ogni huomo che sa lettera non é savio."

The last of the original number of the Cento Novelle is from the 124th chapter of the Gesta Romanorum, of the knights who intercede for their friend with a king, by each coming to court in a singular attitude.

It has already been mentioned, that four tales were added to complete the number of a hun-

dred. One of these is the story of Grasso Legnajuolo, which has been frequently imitated; in this tale Grasso is persuaded to doubt of his own identity. Different persons are posted on the street to accost him as he passes, by the name of another; he at length allows himself to be taken to prison for that person's debts, and the mental confusion in which he is involved during his confinement is well described. Domenico Manni asserts, that this was a real incident, and he tells where and when it happened. Filippo di Ser Brunellesco, he says, contrived the trick, and the sculptor Donatello had a hand in its execution.

A great proportion of the tales of the Cento Novelle are altogether uninteresting, but in their moral tendency they are much less exceptionable than the Fabliaux, by which they were preceded, or the Italian Novelettes, by which they were followed. In general, it may be remarked, that those stories are the best which claim an eastern origin, or are derived from the Gesta Romanorum and the Fabliaux. This, from the examples given, the reader will have difficulty in believing; but those tales which are founded on real incidents, or are taken from the annalists of the country, are totally uninteresting. The repartees are invariably flat, and the jests insipid.

This remark is, I think, also applicable to the

DECAMERON OF BOCCACCIO;

those tales derived from the Fabliaux being invariably the most ingenious and graceful. This celebrated work succeeds, in chronological order, to the Cento Novelle, and is by far the most renowned production in this species of composition. It is styled Decameron, from ten days having been occupied in the relation of the tales, and is also entitled Principe Galeotto,—an appellation which the deputies appointed for correction of the Decameron consider as derived from the 5th canto of Dante's Inferno, Galeotto being the name of that seductive book, which was read by Paulo and Francesca:—

"Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse," &c.

The Decameron is supposed to have been commenced about the year 1348, when Florence was visited by the plague, and finished about 1358. Thus only a period of half a century had intervened from the appearance of the Cento Novelle, and the infinite superiority of the Decameron over

its predecessor, marks in the strongest manner the improvement which, during that interval, had taken place in taste and literature.

Still, however, the Decameron must be chiefly considered as the product of the distinguished mental attainments of its author. Boccaccio was admirably fitted to excel in this sort of composition, both from natural genius,[1] and the species of education he had received. His father apprenticed him in early youth to a merchant, with whom he continued many years, and in whose service he visited different parts of Italy, and, according to some authorities, the capital of France. During these excursions he must have become intimately acquainted with the manners of his native country; and at Paris he would acquire the French language, and, perhaps, study the French authors. Tired with his mercantile employments, Boccaccio next applied himself to canon law, and, in the prosecution of this study, he had occasion to peruse many works, from which, as shall be afterwards shown, he has extracted materials for

[1] "I well remember," says he, in his Genealogy of the Gods, "that before seven years of age, when as yet I had seen no fictions, and had applied to no masters, I had a natural turn for fiction, and produced some trifling tales."—Lib. xv.

the Decameron. Disgusted with law, he finally devoted himself to literature, and was instructed by various masters in all the learning of the age. The greater part of the Decameron, it is true, was written before he had made proficiency in the Greek language; but it cannot be doubted, that, previous to its public appearance, he embellished this work by interweaving fables, which he met with among Greek authors, or which were imparted to him by his master Leontius Pilatus, whom he styles, in the Genealogy of the Gods, a repository of Grecian history and fable.

An investigation of the sources whence the stories in the Decameron have been derived, has long exercised the learning of Italian critics, and has formed the subject of a keen and lasting controversy. The light hitherto thrown on the dispute is such as might be expected, where erudition has been employed for the establishment of a theory, instead of the discovery of truth. Many of the commentators on Boccaccio have been anxious to prove, that his stories are for the most part borrowed from the earlier tales of his own country, and those of the French Trouveurs; others have argued, that the great proportion is of his own invention; while Domenico Manni, in his History of the Decameron, has attempted to

establish that they have been mostly derived from the ancient chronicles and annals of Italy, or have had their foundation on incidents that actually occurred during the age of Boccaccio. There is one fallacy, however, by which this author seems misled, and of which he does not appear to have been aware. This is assuming that a story is true, merely because the characters themselves are not fictitious. Manni seems to have thought, that if he could discover that a merchant of a certain name existed at a certain period, the tale related concerning him must have had a historical foundation. Nothing need be said to expose the absurdity of such conclusions, which would at once transform the greater number of the Arabian tales into historic relations concerning Haroun Alraschid. The adoption of real characters or real places, on which to found a system of romantic incident, is one of the most common, and must have been one of the earliest artifices in fictitious narrative.

To the sources whence they have flowed may be partly ascribed the immorality of the tales of Boccaccio, and the introduction of numerous stories where our disapprobation of the crime is overlooked, in the delight we experience from the description of the ingenuity by which it was accom-

plished. This may also be in some degree accounted for by the character of the author, and manners of the time. But that the relation of such stories should be assigned to ladies, or represented as told in their presence,[1] and that the work, immediately on its appearance, should have become avowedly popular among all classes of readers, is not so much to be imputed to popular rudeness, as to a particular event of the author's age. Just before Boccaccio wrote, the customs and manners of his fellow-citizens underwent a total alteration, owing to the plague which had prevailed in Florence, in the same way as the surviving inhabitants of Lisbon became more dissolute after their earthquake, and the Athenians after the plague by which their city was afflicted. (Thucydides, book 2d.) "Such," says Boccaccio himself in his introduction, "was the public distress, that laws divine and human were no longer regarded."

[1] It is evident that Boccaccio afterwards became ashamed of the licentiousness of the Decameron, and uneasy at the bad moral tendency of some of its stories. In a letter to Maghinardo de Cavalcanti, marshal of Sicily, which is quoted by Tiraboschi, Boccaccio, speaking of his Decameron, says, "sane quod inclitas mulieres tuas domesticas, nugas meas legere permiseris non laudo; quin immo quæso, per fidem tuam, ne feceris."

And we are farther informed by Warton, on the authority of contemporary authors, that the women who had outlived this fatal malady, having lost their husbands and parents, gradually threw off those customary formalities and restraints which had previously regulated their conduct. To females the disorder had been peculiarly fatal, and from want of attendants of their own sex, the ladies were obliged to take men alone into their service, which contributed to destroy their habits of delicacy, and gave an opening to unsuitable freedoms. "As to the monasteries," continues Warton, "it is not surprising that Boccaccio should have made them the scenes of his most libertine stories. The plague had thrown open the gates of the cloister. The monks and nuns wandered abroad, partaking of the common liberties of life and the world, with an eagerness proportioned to the severity of former restraint. When the malady abated, and the religious were compelled to return to their cloisters, they could not forsake their attachment to secular indulgence. They continued to practise the same free course of life, and would not submit to the disagreeable and unsocial injunctions of their respective orders. Contemporary historians give a dreadful picture of the unbounded debaucheries of the Florentines on this

occasion, and ecclesiastical writers mention this period as the grand epoch of the relaxation of monastic discipline."

That ecclesiastical abuses and immorality afforded ample scope for satire, does not require to be proved; but that Boccaccio should have dared to expose them, is the second, and perhaps the most curious problem, connected with the history of the Decameron. It would appear, however, that the geniuses of every country in that age, when papal authority was at its height, employed themselves in satirizing the church. We have already seen the liberty that was taken in this respect, by the authors of the Fabliaux; and their contemporary, Jean de Meun, in his Roman de la Rose, introduces Faux Semblant habited as a monk. In England, about 1350, the corruptions of the clergy, and the absurdities of superstition, couched, it is true, under a thick veil of allegorical invention, were ridiculed with much spirit and humour in the visions of Piers Plowman, while the Sompnour's tale in Chaucer openly exposed the tricks and extortions of the mendicant friars. At first sight it may appear, that the freedom of Boccaccio was more extraordinary than that of the Trouveurs, of Chaucer, or Longland, as he wrote so near the usual seat of church authority; but it

must be recollected, that when Boccaccio attacks the abuses of Rome, it is not properly the church that he vilifies, as the pontifical throne had been transferred from Italy to Avignon, half a century previous to the composition of the Decameron. The former capital is spoken of in similar terms by the gravest writers who were contemporary with Boccaccio. Thus Petrarch terms it,

"Gia Roma, or Babilonia falsa e ria."

The whole city was excommunicated in 1327, and, according to all the authors of the period, presented a terrible scene of vice and confusion. Hence the frequent attacks by Boccaccio on Rome, so far from being considered as marks of disrespect, may be considered as proofs of his zeal for the church, or at least for the schism to which he belonged. Besides, at that period no inquisition existed in Italy, and authors were not accused of heresy for defaming the monks. Much of Boccaccio's satire, too, is directed against the friars, who wandered about as preachers and confessors, and were no favourites of the regular clergy, whom they deprived of profits and inheritances. The church was also aware that the novelists wrote merely for the sake of pleasantry, and without any desire of

reformation:—" Ce n'est point," says Mad. de Staël, " sous un point de vue philosophique, qu' ils attaquent les abus de la religion: ils n'ont pas comme quelques-uns de nos ecrivains, le but de reformer les defauts dont ils plaisantent; ce qu'ils veulent seulement c'est s'amuser d'autant plus que le sujet est plus serieux. C'est la ruse des enfans envers leur pedagogues; ils leur obeissent à condition qu'il leur soit permis de s'en moquer." Yet still, had printing been invented in the age of Boccaccio, and had he published the Decameron on his personal responsibility, his boldness would be totally inexplicable: But it will be remarked, that the Decameron could only be privately circulated, that it was not published for a hundred years after the death of the author, and though the office of an editor might be sufficiently perilous, he would not, even if discovered, have undergone the severity of punishment which would perhaps have been inflicted on the author.

The Italian novelist has been highly extolled for the beautiful and appropriate manner in which he has introduced his stories, which are so much in unison with the gaiety of the scenes by which the narrators are surrounded. In the beginning of the first day he informs us, that, in the year 1348, Florence was visited by a plague, of the ef-

fects of which he gives an admirable description, imitated from Thucydides. During its continuance, seven young ladies accidentally met in the church of St Mary. At the suggestion of Pampinea, the eldest of their number, they resolved on leaving the city which was thus terribly afflicted. Having joined to their company three young men, who were their admirers, and who entered the chapel during their deliberation, they retired to a villa two miles distant from Florence. A description of the beauty of the grounds, the splendour of the habitation, and agreeable employments of the guests, forms a pleasing contrast to the awful images of misery and disease that had been previously presented. The first scene is indeed one of death and desolation, and neither Thucydides nor Lucretius have painted the great scourge of human nature in colours more sombre and terrific: but it changes to pictures the most delightful and attractive, of gay fields, clear fountains, wooded hills, and magnificent castles. Bembo has remarked the charming variety in the rural descriptions, which commence and terminate so many days of the Decameron, (Prose, lib. 2,) and which possess for the Florentines a local truth and beauty which we can scarcely appreciate. The abode to which the festive band first

retire, may be yet recognised in the Poggio Gherardi; the palace described in the prologue to the third day, is the Villa Palmieri, and the valley so beautifully painted near the conclusion of the sixth, is that on which the traveller yet gazes with rapture from the summit of Fiesole. In these delicious abodes the manner of passing the time seems in general to have been this:—Before the sun was high, a repast was served up, which appears to have corresponded to our breakfast, only it consisted chiefly of confections and wine. After this, some went to sleep, while others amused themselves in various pastimes. About mid-day they all assembled round a delightful fountain, where a sovereign being elected to preside over this entertainment, each related a tale. The party consisting of ten, and ten days of the fortnight during which this mode of life continued, being partly occupied with story-telling, the number of tales amounts to a hundred; and the work itself has received the name of the Decameron. A short while after the novels of the day were related, the company partook of a supper, or late dinner, and the evening concluded with songs and music.

Boccaccio was the first of the Italians who gave a dramatic form to this species of composition. In this respect the Decameron has a manifest advan-

tage over the Cento Novelle Antiche, and, in the simplicity of the frame, is superior to the eastern fables, which, in this respect, Boccaccio appears to have imitated. Compared with those compositions which want this dramatic embellishment, it has something of the advantage which a regular comedy possesses over unconnected scenes. Hence, the more natural and defined the plan—the more the characters are diversified, and the more the tales are suited to the characters, the more conspicuous will be the skill of the writer, and his work will approach the nearer to perfection. It has been objected to the plan of Boccaccio, that it is not natural that his company should be devoted to merriment, when they had just interred their nearest relations, or abandoned them in the jaws of the pestilence, and when they themselves were not secure from the distemper, since it is represented as raging in the country with almost equal violence as in the city. But, in fact, it is in such circumstances that mankind are most disposed for amusement; amid general calamities every thing is lost but individual care; it is then, "Vivamus, mea Lesbia!" and even the expectation of death only urges to the speediness of enjoyment:—

"Falle diem; mediis mors venit atra jocis."
Sannaz. Ep.

"The Athenians," (says Thucydides in his celebrated description of the Pestilence,) "seeing the strange mutability of outward condition; the rich untimely cut off, and their wealth pouring suddenly on the indigent, thought it prudent to catch hold of speedy enjoyments and quick gusts of pleasure, persuaded that their bodies and their wealth might be their own merely for the day. No one continued resolute enough to form any honest or generous design, when so uncertain whether he should live to effect it. Whatever he knew could improve the pleasure or satisfaction of the present moment, *that* he determined to be honour and interest. Reverence of the gods, or laws of society, laid no restraint upon them; and as the heaviest of judgments to which man could be doomed, was already hanging over their heads, they snatched the interval of life for pleasure before it fell."—(Smith's Thucydides, vol. ii.)

The gaiety therefore of the characters introduced by Boccaccio in his Decameron, so far from being a defect in his plan, evinces his knowledge of human nature. However, it must be admitted.

that the action of the Decameron is faulty, from being in a great measure indefinite. It is not limited by its own nature, as by the close of a pilgrimage or voyage, but is terminated at the will of the author; and the most prominent reason for the return of the company to Florence is, that the budget of tales is exhausted. The characters, too, resemble each other, and have no peculiar shades of disposition, except Dioneo (by whom Boccaccio is said to represent himself,) and Philostrato; of whom the former is of a comical, and the latter of a melancholy frame of mind. It was thus impossible to assign characteristic stories to the whole *dramatis personæ*, and though there be two persons whose dispositions have been contrasted, some of the most ludicrous stories have been given to Philostrato, and the tale of Griselda, which is generally accounted the most pathetic in the work, is put into the mouth of Dioneo. On this point, however, it may be remarked, that although, as in the case of Chaucer, it may not be difficult to assign one distinctive story to a strongly-marked character, yet it was scarcely in the power of human genius to have invented ten discriminative tales, each of which was to be expressive of the manners and modes of thinking of one individual. Besides, where the characters were so few, this would have

given a monotony to the whole work, and the introduction of a greater number would have been inconsistent with the basis of the author's plan.

If the frame in which Boccaccio has set his Decameron be compared with that in which the Canterbury Tales have been enclosed by Chaucer, who certainly imitated the Italian novelist, it will be found that the time chosen by Boccaccio is infinitely preferable to that adopted by the English poet. The pilgrims of the latter relate their stories on a journey, though they are on horseback, and are twenty-nine in number; and it was intended, had the author completed his plan, that this rabble should have told the remainder of their tales in an abominable tavern at Canterbury. On the other hand, the Florentine assembly discourse in tranquillity and retirement, surrounded by all the delights of rural scenery, and all the magnificence of architecture. But then the frame of Chaucer afforded a much greater opportunity of displaying a variety of striking and dramatic characters, and thence of introducing characteristic tales. His assemblage is mixed and fortuitous, and his travellers are distinguished from each other both in person and character. Even his serious pilgrims are marked by their several sorts of gravity, and the ribaldry of his low characters is dif-

ferent. " I see," says Dryden, " every one of the pilgrims in the Canterbury Tales as distinctly as if I had supped with them." All the company in the Decameron, on the other hand, are fine ladies and gentlemen of Florence, who retire to enjoy the sweets of select society, and who would scarcely have tolerated the intrusion of such figures as the Miller or the Sompnour.

Having said this much of the general features, and introduction of the Decameron, we shall now direct our attention to the tales of which it is composed; the merit of their incidents; the sources from which they have originated, and their influence on the literature of subsequent ages. These tales have been variously classified by different critics. The most complete division of them has been made by Jason de Nores in his Poetica, (par. 3.) " Si dimostra dalla distinzione del Decamerone che l' autore le divide tacitamente nel proemio in *Novelle*, come son quelle di Calandrino; in *Parabole*, come è quella di Mitridanes, e di Milesio, e di Giosepho; in *Istorie* come la Marchese di Saluzzo e Griselda; e in *Favole* come Guglielmo Rossiglione, Conte Anguersa, e Minghino, e infinite altre; intendendo per favola, nel modo che Aristotile nella sua poetica, argomenti e azione, o tragiche eroiche o comiche." This classifica-

tion is extremely vague and fanciful, nor would it be easy to fix on one more satisfactory and defined. The only division to which the Decameron can properly be subjected, is the artificial one contrived by the author. In eight of the ten days into which it is distributed, a particular subject is assigned to the relaters, as stories of comical or melancholy vicissitudes of life, splendid examples of generosity, &c. Dioneo, however, is exempted from this restriction, and is allowed to indulge in whatever topic he chuses. His story is always the last, and generally the most licentious, of the day.

This limitation of subject does not commence in the first day of the Decameron, during which each of the company relates whatever is most agreeable to him, and Pamphilus, by command of the queen, commences the entertainment.

Day I. 1. Musciatto Franzesi, a wealthy French merchant, when about to accompany the brother of his king to Tuscany, intrusted Ciappelletto, a notary from Prato, who had frequented his house in Paris, with the charge of collecting, in his absence, some debts that were due to him. To this choice he was led by the malevolent disposition and profligate character of Ciappelletto, which he thought would render him fit to deal with his debt-

ors, who, for the most part, were persons of indifferent credit and bad faith. Ciappelletto, in the course of exacting the sums that were owing to his employer, proceeded to Burgundy, and, during his stay in that province, he lodged with two brothers, who were usurers. Persons of this description are common characters in the Fabliaux and Italian novels: they came to France from Italy, and established themselves chiefly at Nismes and Montpellier, and received the name of Lombards. They lent on pledge at twenty per cent., and if the loan was not repaid at the end of six months the pledge was forfeited. While residing in the house of the usurers, Ciappelletto is suddenly taken ill. During his sickness he one day overhears his hosts deliberate on turning him out, lest, being unable to obtain absolution, on account of the multitude and enormity of his crimes, his body should be refused church sepulture, and their house be, in consequence, assaulted and plundered;—compliments which it seems the mob were predisposed to pay them. Ciappelletto desires them to send for a priest, and give themselves no farther uneasiness, as he will make a satisfactory confession. The holy man having arrived, inquires, among other things, if he had ever sinned in gluttony. His penitent, with many groans, answers, that after long fasts he

had often eat bread and water with too much relish and pleasing appetite, especially when he had previously suffered great fatigue in prayer or in pilgrimage. The priest again asks if he had ever been transported with anger? to which Ciappelletto replies, that he had often felt emotions of resentment when he heard young men swear, or saw them haunt taverns, follow vanities, and affect the follies of the world. Similar answers are received by the confessor to all the questions he puts to his penitent, who, when now about to receive absolution, spontaneously acknowledges, with many groans and other testimonies of repentance, that he had once in his life spit in the house of God, and had on one occasion desired his maid to sweep his house on a holiday. All this passes to the great amusement of the usurers, who were posted behind a partition. The friar, astonished at the sanctity of the penitent, gives him immediate absolution and benediction. On the death of Ciappelletto, which happened soon after, his confessor having called a chapter, informs his brethren of his holy life. The brotherhood watch that night in the place where the corse lay, and next morning, dressed in their hoods and surplices, attend the body, with much solemnity, to the chapel of their monastery, where a funeral oration is pro-

nounced over the remains, in which the preacher expatiates on the chastity and fastings of the deceased. Such is the effect of this discourse on the audience, that when the service is ended the funeral garments are rent in pieces, as precious relics: and so great was the reputation of this wretch for sanctity, that after the interment all the neighbourhood long paid their devotions at his sepulchre, and miracles were believed to be wrought at the shrine of Saint Ciappelletto.

This tale seems intended as a satire on the Romish church, for having canonized such a number of worthless persons. It is but an indifferent commencement to the work of Boccaccio, yet there is something amusing in the deep affliction Ciappelletto expresses for trifling transgressions, when we have just read the long list of enormities with which the narrative begins.

The story of Ciappelletto is one of the tales of the Decameron supposed by Domenico Manni to be founded on fact; but of this he has adduced no proof, except that in the year 1300, a person of the name of Muccatto did, in fact, as mentioned in the tale, reside with a brother of the king of France.

2. Giannotto, a mercer in Paris, had an inti-

mate friend called Abraam, of the Jewish persuasion, whom he attempted to convert to Christianity. After much solicitation and argument, Abraam promised to change his religion, if on going to Rome he should find, from the morals and behaviour of the clergy, that the faith of his friend was preferable to his own. This intention was opposed by Giannotto, who dreaded the consequence of the Jew beholding the depraved conduct of the leaders of the church. His resolution, however, was not to be shaken, and, on arriving at Rome, he found the pope, cardinal, and prelates immersed in gluttony, drunkenness, and every detestable vice. On returning to Paris, he declared to Giannotto his determination to be baptized, being convinced that that religion must be true, and supported by the Holy Spirit, which had flourished and spread over the earth, in spite of the enormities of its ministers.

This story is related as having really happened, by Benvenuto da Imola, in his commentary on Dante, which was written in 1376, but none of which was ever printed, except a few passages quoted by Muratori in his Italian Antiquities *medii aevi*.

On account of the severe censures contained against the church in this and the preceding tale,

they both received considerable corrections by order of the council of Trent.

3. The sultan Saladin wishing to borrow a large sum from a rich but niggardly Jew of Alexandria, called him into his presence. Saladin was aware he would not lend the money willingly, and he was not disposed to force a compliance: he therefore resolved to ensnare him by asking whether he judged the Mahometan, Christian, or Jewish faith, to be the true one. In answer to this the Jew related the story of a man who had a ring, which in his family had always carried the inheritance along with it to whomsoever it was bequeathed. The possessor having three sons, and being importuned by each to bestow it on him, secretly ordered two rings to be made, precisely similar to the first, and privately gave one of the three to each of his children. At his death it was impossible to ascertain who was the heir. 'Neither,' says the Jew, 'can it be discovered which is the true religion of the three faiths given by the Father to his three people. Each believes itself the heir of God, and obeys his commandments, but which is the pure law is hitherto uncertain.' The sultan was so pleased with the ingenuity of the Jew, that he frankly confessed the snare he had laid, received

him into great favour, and was accommodated with the money he wanted.

Most of those stories, which seem to contain a sneer against the Christian religion, came from the Jews and Arabians who had settled in Spain. The novel of Boccaccio probably originated in some Rabbinical tradition. In the Schebet Judah, a Hebrew work, translated into Latin by Gentius, but originally written by the Jew Salomo Ben Virga, and containing the history of his nation from the destruction of the Temple to his own time, a conversation which passed between Peter the Elder, king of Spain, and the Jew Ephraim Sanchus, is recorded in that part of the work which treats of the persecutions which the Jews suffered in Spain. Peter the Elder, in order to entrap Ephraim, asked him whether the Jewish or Christian religion was the true one. The Jew requested three days to consider, and at the end of that period he told the king "that one of his neighbours, who had lately gone abroad, left each of his sons a precious jewel, and that being called in to decide which was the most valuable, he had advised the decision to be deferred till the return of their father. In like manner," continued the Jew, "you ask whether the gem received by

Jacob or Esau be most precious, but I recommend that the judgment should be referred to our father who is in Heaven." I believe the Schebet Judah was not written till near a century after the appearance of the Decameron, but the stories related in it had been long current among the Jewish Rabbins. The author of the Gesta Romanorum probably derived from them the story of the three rings, which forms the 89th chapter of that romantic compilation. From the Gesta Romanorum it passed to the Cento Novelle Antiche, of which the 72d tale is probably the immediate original of the story in the Decameron.

We are told in the Menagiana, that some persons believed that Boccaccio's story of the rings gave rise to the report concerning the existence of the book De Tribus Impostoribus, about which there has been so much controversy. Mad. de Staël says, in her "Germany," that Boccaccio's novel formed the foundation of the plot of Nathan the Wise, which is the masterpiece of Lessing, the great founder of the German drama.

4. A young monk, belonging to a monastery in the neighbourhood of Florence, prevails on a peasant girl, whom he meets on his walks, to accompany him to his cell. While there he is overheard

by the abbot, who approaches the door to listen with more advantage. The monk, hearing the sound of feet, peeps through a crevice in the wall, and perceives his superior at the entrance. In order to save himself from chastisement, he resolves to lead the abbot into temptation. Pretending that he was going abroad, he leaves with him, as was customary, the keys of the cell. It is soon unlocked by the abbot, and the monk, who, instead of going out, had concealed himself in the dormitory, is supplied with ample materials for recrimination. I am surprised that this story has not been versified by Fontaine, as it is precisely in the style of those he delighted to imitate.

Of this day the six remaining tales consist merely in sayings and reproofs, some of which are represented as having had the most wonderful effects. Nothing can be more ridiculous than feigning that a character should be totally changed, that the avaricious should become liberal, as in the eighth, or the indolent active, as in ninth novel, by means of a repartee, which would not be tolerated in the most ordinary jest-book.

The evening of the first day was passed in singing and dancing, and a new queen, or mistress

of ceremonies, was appointed for the succeeding one.

Day II. contains stories of those who, after experiencing a variety of troubles, at length meet with success, contrary to all hope and expectation.[1]

The merit of the first story depends entirely on the mode of relating it; and however comical and lively in the original, would appear insipid in an abridged translation.

2. Rinaldo d'Asti, on his way from Ferrara to Verona, inadvertently joined some persons, whom he mistook for merchants, but who were in reality highwaymen. As the conversation happened to turn upon prayer, Rinaldo mentioned that when going on a journey he always repeated the paternoster of St Julian, by which means he had invariably obtained good accommodation at night. The robbers said they had never repeated the paternoster, but that it would be seen which had the best lodging that evening. Having come to a retired place, they stripped their fellow traveller, took what money he had, and left him naked at the side of the road, with many banters concerning

[1] Di chi da diversi cosi infestato sia oltre alla speranza riuscito a liete fine.

St Julian. Rinaldo, having recovered, arrives late at night at the gates of Castel Guglielmo, a fortified town. A widow, who was now the mistress of Azzo, marquis of Ferrara, possessed a house near the ramparts. She had been sitting up expecting her lover, for whom she had prepared the bath, and provided an elegant repast: but as she had just received intelligence that he could not come, she calls in Rinaldo, whom she hears at the porch. He is hospitably entertained by her at supper, and, for that night, makes up to his hostess for the absence of the marquis. The robbers, on the other hand, are apprehended and thrown into prison that very evening, and executed on the following morning.

St Julian was eminent for providing his votaries with good lodging: in the English title of his legend he is called the *gode Herbejour;* and Chaucer, in his Canterbury Tales, bestows on the Frankelein, on account of his luxurious hospitality, the title of Seint Julian. When the child Anceaume, in the romance of Milles and Amys, is carried on shore by the swan, and hospitably received by the woodman, it is said, "qu' il avoit trouvé *Sainct Julien* a son commandement, sans dire patenostre." This saint was originally a knight, and, as was prophesied to him by a stag, he had the sin-

gular hap to kill both his father and mother by mistake. As an atonement for his carelessness, he afterwards founded a sumptuous hospital for the accommodation of travellers, who, in return for their entertainment, were required to repeat paternosters for the souls of his unfortunate parents. The story of St Julian is related in chapter eighteen of the Gesta Romanorum, and in the Legenda Aurea. It is this novel of Boccaccio that has given rise to L'oraison de St Julien of Fontaine, and Le Talisman, a comedy, by La Motte. There is also some resemblance between it and part of the old English comedy, The Widow, which was produced by the united labours of Ben Johnson, Fletcher, and Middleton. In that play, Ansaldo, after being robbed and stript of his clothes, is received in the house of Philippa, to whom he was a stranger, but who had prepared a banquet, and was sitting up in expectation of the arrival of her lover Francisco. (See Dodsley's Collection, vol. 12.)

5. Andreuccio, a horse-dealer at Perugia, hearing that there were good bargains to be had at Naples, sets out for that city. His purse, which he ostentatiously displays in the Neapolitan market, is coveted by a Sicilian damsel, who, having informed herself concerning the family of Andreuc-

cio, sends for him in the evening to her house, which is described as very elegant. The furniture is costly, the apartments are perfumed with roses and orange flowers, and a sumptuous entertainment is prepared. From this, and another tale of Boccaccio, and more particularly from the 12th novel of Fortini, it would appear that persons of this description lived, at that period, in a very splendid style in the south of Italy. The courtezan having persuaded Andreuccio, by an artful story, that she is a sister whom he had lost, he agrees to remain that night at her lodgings. After he had thrown off his clothes, he falls, by means of a trap-board, which was prepared by her contrivance, into the inmost recess of a place seldom resorted to from choice, on which his sister takes possession of his purse and garments. Being at length extricated from his uncomfortable situation by assistance of some of the neighbours, he judiciously proceeds towards the seashore; but on his way he meets with certain persons who were proceeding to violate the sepulchre of an archbishop of Naples, who had been interred that day, with many ornaments, particularly a valuable ring, on the body. Andreuccio having imparted to them his story, they promise to share with him their expected booty, as a compensation

for the loss he had sustained. When the tomb is at length broken into, Andreuccio is deputed to strip the corse. He takes possession of the ring for himself, and hands to his comrades the other ornaments, as the pastoral staff and mitre: but in order that they may not be obliged to share these with him, they shut him up in the vault. From this situation he is delivered by some one breaking into the sepulchre on a similar speculation with that in which he had himself engaged, and returns to his own country reimbursed for all his losses by the valuable ring. The first part of this story has been imitated in many tales and romances, particularly in Gil Blas, where a deceit, similar to that practised by the Sicilian damsel, has been adopted. One of the Fabliaux of the Trouveurs, entitled Boivin de Provins (Barbazan, 3. 357), is the origin of all those numerous tales, in which the unwary are cozened by courtezans assuming the character of lost relations.

7. A sultan of Babylon had a daughter, who was the fairest princess of the east. In recompense of some eminent services rendered by the king of Algarva, she is sent by her father to be espoused by that monarch. A tempest arises during the voyage, and the ship, which conveyed the destined bride, splits on the island of Majorca. The

princess is saved by the exertions of Pericone, a nobleman of the country, who had perceived from shore the distress of the vessel. She is hospitably entertained in his castle by her preserver, who soon falls in love with her; and one night, after a feast, during which he had served her liberally with wine, she bestows on him what had been intended for his majesty of Algarva. The princess of Babylon passes successively into the possession of the brother of Pericone—the prince of Morea—the duke of Athens—Constantius, son of the emperor of Constantinople—Osbech, king of the Turks—one of Osbech's officers, and a merchant, who was a friend of this officer. Her first lovers obtain her by murdering their predecessors: she afterwards elopes with her admirers, and is at length transferred by legacy or purchase. While residing with her last and least distinguished protector, she meets with Antigonus, an old servant of her father, by whose means she is restored to him. As the princess, by an artful tale, persuades the sultan that she had austerely spent the period of her absence in a convent, he scruples not to send her, according to her original destination, to the king of Algarva, who does not discover that he is the ninth proprietor.—"Bocca Basciata non perde ventura, anzi rinnuova come fa la luna."

This story is taken from the romance of Xenophon Ephesius, and has furnished Fontaine with his tale La Fiancée du Roi de Garbe.

8. Does not possess much merit or originality of invention. The revenge taken by a queen of France for a slighted passion, is as old as the story of Bellerophon, though it has been directly imitated by Boccaccio from that of Pier della Broccia and the Lady of Brabant in Dante. Another part of the tale has certainly been taken from the story of Antiochus and Stratonice.

9. In a company of Italian merchants, who happened to meet at Paris, Bernabo of Genoa boasts of the virtue of his wife Zineura. Provoked by the incredulity of Ambrogivolo, one of his companions, who was a contemner of female chastity, he bets five thousand florins against a thousand that Ambrogivolo will not seduce her affections in the space of three months, which he grants him for this purpose. This scandalous wager being concluded, Ambrogivolo departs for Genoa. On his arrival at that place he hears such a report of the virtues of the lady in question, that he despairs of winning her affections, and therefore resolves to have recourse to stratagem, in order to gain the stake. Having bribed one of Zineura's attend-

ants, he is concealed in a chest, and thus carried into the chamber of the lady. At night, while she is asleep, he possesses himself of some trinkets belonging to her, and also becomes acquainted with a particular mark on her left breast. Bernabo, by this deceit, being persuaded of the infidelity of his wife, pays the five thousand florins, and, advancing towards Genoa, despatches a servant avowedly to bring his wife to him, but with private instructions to murder her by the way. The servant, however, after he had found a proper place on the road for the execution of his purpose, agrees to spare her, on condition of her flying from the country; but he reports to his master that he had fulfilled his orders. In the disguise of a mariner Zineura embarks in a merchant ship for Alexandria, where, after some time, she enters into the service of the soldan. She gains the confidence of her master in a remarkable degree, who, not suspecting her sex, sends her as captain of the guard which was appointed for the protection of the merchants at the fair of Acre. Here, among other toys, she sees the ornaments which had been stolen from her chamber, in possession of Ambrogivolo, who had come there to dispose of a stock of goods, and who relates to her, in confidence, the manner

in which the trinkets had been obtained. The fair being over, she persuades him to accompany her to Alexandria. She also sends to Italy, and induces her husband, Bernabo, to come to settle in the same place. Then, in presence of her husband and the sultan, she makes Ambrogivolo confess his treachery, and discovers herself to be the unfortunate Zineura. The traitor is ordered to be fastened to a stake, and, being smeared with honey, is exposed naked to the gluttony of all the locusts of Egypt, while Barnabo, loaded with presents from the sultan, returns with his wife to Genoa.

This story has been regarded as one of the best in Boccaccio; it seems defective, however, in this, that the resentment we ought to feel at the conduct of the villain, is lost in indignation at the folly and baseness of the husband.

The above is the tale from which Pope imagined that Shakspeare had taken the principal plot of his Cymbeline. In the notes to Johnson's Shakspeare this is said to be a mistake, and it is there asserted, that the story is derived from a collection of tales called Westward for Smelts, published in 1603, the second story of which is an imitation of Boccaccio's novel. But it seems more probable that the plot of Cymbeline was drawn

directly from the original, or some translation of it, as the circumstances in the drama bear a much stronger resemblance to the Italian novel than to the English imitation. Thus Shakspeare's Jachimo, who is the Ambrogivolo of the Decameron, hides himself in a chest, but the villain in Westward for Smelts conceals himself below the lady's bed; nor does he impress on his memory the appearance of the chamber and the pictures, as Ambrogivolo and Jachimo do, in order to give a stronger air of probability to their false relation. Lastly, in Cymbeline and the Decameron the imposition is aided by a circumstance that does not at all occur in Westward for Smelts. Both Ambrogivolo and Jachimo report to the husband that they have discovered a certain mark on the breast of the lady. "Ma niuno segnale," says the former, "da potere rapportare le vide, fuori che uno che ella n' havea sotto la sinistra poppa; cio era un neo, dintorno alquale erano alquanti peluzzi biondi come oro;" and Jachimo, when he has emerged from the trunk, finds, in the course of his examination,

> On her left breast
> A mole cinque spotted, like the crimson drops
> I' the bottom of a cowslip.—*Act II. Scene II.*

And again, when addressing Posthumus,

> If you seek
> For further satisfying, under her breast
> (Worthy the pressing) lies a mole, &c.

The incidents of the novel have been very closely adhered to by Shakspeare, but, as has been remarked by an acute and elegant critic, the scenes and characters have been most injudiciously altered, and the manners of a tradesman's wife, and two intoxicated Italian merchants, have been bestowed on a great princess, a British hero, and a noble Roman. Those slight alterations that have been made do not seem to be improvements. In the Decameron the villain effects every thing by stratagem and bribery, but Jachimo is recommended by Posthumus to the princess. This loads the husband with additional infamy; and, besides, it is not very probable that Imogen, who was strictly watched, should have been able to give audience to a stranger who came from the residence of her banished lord. In Boccaccio, Zineura prevails on the servant, by intercession, to allow her to escape, but this had been resolved on by the confident of Posthumus before he conveyed Imogen from her father's palace. This predeter-

mined disobedience of the orders of his master gives rise to the very pertinent question of Imogen, to which no satisfactory answer is returned,

> Wherefore then
> Didst undertake it? Why hast thou abused
> So many miles with a pretence? This place?
> Mine action, and thine own? *our horses' labour?*

After Imogen's life is spared, Shakspeare entirely quits the novel, and the remaining part of the drama, perhaps, does as little honour to his invention as the preceding scenes to his judgment. "To remark," says Johnson, "the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation."

10. Is Fontaine's Calendrier des Viellards. The concluding incident corresponds with one in the story D'un Tailleur et de sa Femme, in the Contes Turcs.

On the two following days, which were Friday and Saturday, no tales are related, as the first was reverenced on account of our Saviour's passion, and the second kept as a fast in honour of the

Holy Virgin. The tales are therefore suspended till Sunday, and it is resolved that the company should remove to another palace in the neighbourhood, where suitable preparations had been made for their reception.

Day III. commences with a description of the new abode to which the party had betaken themselves. It was a sumptuous palace, seated on an eminence which rose in the middle of a plain. Here they found the spacious halls and ornamented chambers supplied with all things that could administer to delight. Below they noted the pleasant court, the cellars stored with the choicest wines, and the cool abundant springs of water which every where flowed. Thence they went to repose in a fair gallery which overlooked the court, and was decked with all the flowers and shrubs of the season. They next opened a garden which communicated with the palace. Around and through the midst of this paradise there were spacious walks, environed with vines, which promised a plenteous vintage, and, being then in blossom, spread so delicious an odour, that, joined with the other flowers then blowing in the garden, the fragrance rivalled the fresh spiceries of the east. The sides of the alleys were closed with jessamine

and roses, forming an odoriferous shade that excluded not only the rays of the morning, but the mid-day beam. In the middle of this garden was a verdant meadow, spangled with a thousand flowers, and circled with orange trees, whose branches, stored at once with blossoms and fruit, presented a refreshing object, and yielded grateful odour. A fountain of white marble, of wondrous workmanship, adorned the centre of this meadow, and from an image, standing on a column placed in the fountain, a jet of water spouted up, and again fell into the basin with a pleasing murmur. Those waters, which overflowed, were conveyed through the meadow by an unseen channel to irrigate all parts of the garden, and, again uniting, rushed in a full and clear current to the plain. This extraordinary garden was likewise full of all sorts of animals—the deer and goats grazed at their pleasure, or reposed on the velvet grass—the birds vied with each other in the various melody of their notes, and seemed to warble in response or emulation.

One of the sides of this fountain was selected as the most agreeable spot for relating the tales. It had been agreed that the subject should still be the mutability of fortune, and especially of those who had acquired, by their diligence, something

greatly wanted, or else recovered what they had lost.[1]

1. The gardener of a convent, which consisted of eight nuns and an abbess, gave up his employment; and, on returning to his native village, complained bitterly to Masetto, a young man of his acquaintance, of the small wages he had received, and also of the caprice of his mistresses. Masetto, so far from being discouraged by this account, resolves to obtain the situation. That he might not be rejected on account of his youth and good person, he feigns that he is dumb, and is readily engaged by the steward of the convent. For some time he cultivates the garden in a manner most consolatory to the eight nuns, and at length to the abbess herself; but one day, to their utter astonishment, he breaks silence, and complains of the *extra* labour imposed on him. A compromise, however, is made, and a partial remission of his multifarious duties acceded to on the part of the nuns. On the death of the steward, Masetto is chosen in his place; and it is believed in the neighbourhood that his speech had been restored by the prayers of the sisters to the tutelar saint to whose honour the monastery was erected.

[1] Di chi alcuna cosa molto da lui desiderata con industria acquistasse, o la perduta ricoverasse.

This story is taken from the Cento Novelle Antiche, but Boccaccio has substituted an abbess and her nuns for a countess and her *camerarie ;* thus, to the great scandal of Vannozzi, attributing to sacred characters what his predecessor had only ascribed to the profane.—" Attribuendo a persone sacre, il Boccaccio, quella colpa che dal suo anteriore fu ascritta a persone profane."—(*Miscel. let.* vol. I. p. 580.) The story in the Decameron is the Mazet de Lamporechio of Fontaine.

2. An equerry of Queen Teudelinga, the consort of Agiluf, king of the Lombards, falls in love with his mistress. Aware that he had nothing to hope from an open declaration of love, he resolves to personate the king, and thus gain access to the apartment of her majesty. King Agiluf resorted only during a certain part of the night to the chamber of the queen. The amorous groom procures a mantle similar to that in which Agiluf wrapt himself on these occasions; takes a torch and rod in his hand, as was his majesty's custom, and being farther aided by a strong personal resemblance, is readily admitted into the queen's apartment, where he represents his master. He had no sooner stolen back to his own bed, than he is succeeded by the king, who discovers what had happened, from his wife expressing her admira-

tion at such a speedy return. His majesty instantly proceeds to the gallery where all his household slept, with the view of discovering the person who had usurped his place, from the palpitation of his heart. Fear and agitation betray the offender, and his master, that he might distinguish him in the morning, cuts off a lock of his hair above the ear. The groom, who knew the intent of this, escapes punishment by clipping, as soon as the king had departed, a corresponding lock from the heads of all his companions.

In the 40th chapter of the Gesta Romanorum, said to be from Macrobius, a wife's infidelity is discovered by feeling her pulse in conversation; but a story much nearer to that of Boccaccio occurs in Hebers' French metrical romance of the Seven Sages, though, I believe, it is not in the original Syntipas. The tale, however, has been taken immediately from the 98th of the Cento Novelle Antiche; and it has been imitated in turn in the Muletier of Fontaine. Giannone, in his History of Naples, has censured, not without some reason, the impertinence of Boccaccio in applying this story, without right, truth, or pretence, to the pious Queen Theudelinda:—"Principessa e per le eccelse doti del suo animo, e per la sua rada pieta dignissima di lode, e da annoverarsi fra le donne

piu illustri del mondo, la quale non meritava esser posta in novella da Giovanni Boccaccio, nel suo Decamerone." (Dell' Istoria civile di Napoli, lib. 4. c. 5.)

3. A beautiful woman, who was the wife of a clothier in Florence, fell in love with a gentleman of the same city. In order to acquaint him with her passion, she sent for a friar who frequented his house, and, under pretence of confession, complained that this gentleman besieges her dwelling, lies in wait for her in the street, or ogles her from the opposite window, and concluded with begging the confessor to give him a rebuke. Next day the friar reprimanded his friend, who, being quick of apprehension, profited by the hint, and made love to the clothier's wife in the manner pointed out in her counterfeit complaint, but had no opportunity to speak with her. The lady, to encourage him still farther, now presented him, by means of the priest, with a purse and girdle, which, she says, he had the audacity to send, but which her conscience will not allow her to keep. Lastly, she complained to her confessor, that her husband having gone to Genoa, his friend had entered the garden, and attempted to break in at the window, by ascending one of the trees. He was, as usual, rebuked by the priest, and

having now fully learned his love-lesson, he climbed one of the trees in the garden, and thus entered the casement, which was open to receive him.

This story is related in Henry Stephens' Introduction to the Apology of Herodotus. It is told of a lady of Orleans, who, in like manner, employed the intervention of her confessor to lure to her arms a scholar of whom she was enamoured. The tale of Boccaccio has suggested to Moliere his play L' Ecole des Maris, where Isabella enters into a correspondence, and at length effects a marriage, with her lover, by complaining to her guardian Sganarelle in the same manner as the clothier's wife to her confessor. Otway's comedy of the Soldier's Fortune, in which Lady Dunce employs her husband to deliver the ring and letter to her admirer Captain Belguard, also derives its origin from the above tale in the Decameron.

4. Is a very insipid story.

5. Which is the Magnifique of Fontaine, has given rise to a drama by La Motte, and seems also to have suggested a scene in Ben Jonson's comedy, The Devil is an Ass, where Wittipol makes a present of a cloak to a husband for leave to pay his addresses to the wife for a quarter of an hour.

6. Richard Minutolo, a young man of rank and fortune in Naples, falls in love with Catella, the most beautiful woman in that city. Knowing her to be jealous of her husband, he pretends that he had discovered an intrigue between his own wife and her spouse, advising her, if she wish to ascertain his guilt, to repair next night to a bath where they had agreed to meet, and there personate the lady with whom her husband had the assignation. Having resolved to follow this counsel, Catella is received, by Minutolo's contrivance, in a darkened apartment, where, after she had obtained full conviction of her husband's infidelity, she loads him with reproaches, but is much disconcerted, when expecting his apology, to receive amorous excuses from Minutolo.

I do not think this story occurs either in the selection of Fabliaux published by Barbazan or Le Grand, but I have little doubt that it exists among those which have not been brought to light. The incident has been a favourite one with subsequent novelists. For example, it corresponds with one of the tales of Sacchetti, and with the fourth of the Fourth Decade of Cinthio. It has also been versified by Fontaine, in his Richard Minutolo.

7. & 8. Are but indifferent stories. The last is the Feronde ou le Purgatoire of Fontaine, and has given rise to a comic scene in the Fatal Marriage of Southern, in which Fernando is made to believe that he had been dead, buried, and in purgatory,—an incident omitted in this piece, as it has been altered for the stage by Garrick.

9. Giletta di Nerbona was daughter to the physician of the count of Roussillon, and almost from infancy had fixed her affections on Beltram, the count's son. On the death of his father this young man, as he had been left in charge to the king of France, repaired to the court at Paris, leaving Giletta much afflicted at his departure. Meanwhile it was rumoured that the king had been seized with a dangerous malady, which baffled all the skill of his physicians: Giletta, who was anxious for a pretext to follow her beloved Beltram, set out for Paris, and as she had been instructed in the secrets of her father's art, succeeded in curing the king of the disorder with which he was afflicted. His majesty promised, as a recompence, to marry her to any one on whom she should fix, and she accordingly demanded Beltram of Roussillon as her husband. The count, disliking the marriage to which he was now constrained by the king, immediately after the celebration

of the nuptials departed for Tuscany, and his bride returned to Roussillon, where she took the management of the estates of her husband. While in Tuscany, Beltram received a conciliatory message from Giletta, but replied to her emissaries, that he would never treat her as his wife till she had a son by him, and obtained possession of a favourite ring which he constantly wore on his finger. To accomplish these conditions, the fulfilment of which the count considered as impossible, Giletta set out for Florence. On her arrival she learned that the count had fallen in love with a young woman of reduced circumstances in that town. Having made an arrangement with the mother of the girl, the count was given to understand that he would that night be received at the house of his mistress, if he previously sent her his ring as a proof of affection. This essential token having been obtained, Giletta next represented the young woman of whom the count was enamoured. Beltram soon after returned to his own states, and Giletta, in due time, repaired to Roussillon, where she arrived during a great festival, and having presented her husband with his ring, and two sons to whom she had given birth, was acknowledged as countess of Roussillon.

In this tale Boccaccio has displayed consider-

able genius and invention, but it is difficult for the reader to reconcile himself to the character, or approve the feelings, of its heroine. Considering the disparity of rank and fortune, it was, perhaps, indelicate to demand as her husband, a man from whom she had received no declaration nor proof of attachment; but she certainly overstepped all the bounds of female decorum, in pertinaciously insisting on the celebration of a marriage to which he expressed such invincible repugnance. His submission was as mean as her obstinacy was ungenerous, especially as he had pre-determined to renounce and forsake her. After this forced and imperfect union, she thought herself entitled to take possession of the paternal inheritance of her husband, while she knew that he was wandering in a foreign land, and that she was the cause of his exile. The absurd conditions proposed by Beltram, are too evidently contrived for the sake of their completion. When Giletta arrives at Florence, in order to fulfil them, she finds not only that the indifference of the count continues, but that his affections are fixed on another object;—yet neither her pride nor jealousy are alarmed; she ingratiates herself with the family of a rival, and contrives a stratagem, the success of which could have bound Beltram neither

in law nor in honour. The triumph and coronet it procured must have been but a poor gratification, nor could she in any way have atoned for her preceding self-debasement, unless by renouncing all claim to her husband, or by conciliating his affections by her beauty or virtues.

Shakspeare has taken this story, with all its imperfections on its head, as the basis of his comedy, All's Well that Ends Well. It probably came to the dramatist through the medium of Painter's Giletta of Narbon, published in the Palace of Pleasure, 1569, (vol i. p. 90.) The preliminary circumstances are the same in the English comedy and Italian novel; but in the former the catastrophe has been much protracted. There Helena, who is the Giletta of the novel, after she had obtained one of her credentials, and put herself in the way of procuring the other, spreads, for no purpose, a report of her death; it is in consequence believed, that she had been murdered by her husband, and he is thrown into prison. We have also the useless additions of the newly-projected marriage of the count with the daughter of a French nobleman, and the appearance of Diana, his Florentine flame, at court, in order to claim him as her husband. Shakspeare has also added, from his own imagination, his usual characters of a

clown and a boasting coward. "The story," says Johnson, "of Bertram and Diana, had been told before of Mariana and Angelo, and, to confess the truth, scarcely merited to be heard a second time." This tale of Boccaccio has also formed the subject of one of the oldest Italian comedies, entitled Virginia, which was written by B. Accolti, and printed in 1513. The plot of this drama has been taken, with little variation, from Boccaccio, as appears from the argument prefixed:—

Virginia amando, el Re guarisce, e chiede
Di Salerno el gran principe in marito;
Qual constrecto a sposarla, è poi partito
Par mai tornar fin lei viva si vede:
Cercha Virginia scrivendo mercede,
Ma el principe da molta ira assalito
Li domanda, s' a lei vuol sia redito,
Dura condition qual impossibil crede.
Pero Virginia, sola e travestita
Partendo, ogni impossibil conditione
Adempie al fin con prudentia infinita;
Onde el Principe, pien d' admiratione,
Lei di favore et gratia rivestita
Sposa di nuovo con molta affectione.—

10. Cannot well be extracted. It is the Diable en Enfer of Fontaine.

It will have been remarked, that most of the stories in this Day relate to love intrigues, and are of a comic nature; those of

Day IV. are for the most part tragic narratives concerning persons whose loves had an unfortunate conclusion.[1] This subject was suitable to the temper of Philostrato, the master of ceremonies for this day, who is represented as of a melancholy disposition, and as having been disappointed in love.

From the introduction to the Fourth Day, it would appear that the preceding part of the Decameron had been made public before the author advanced farther, as he takes pains to reply to the censures passed on him by certain persons who had perused his novels. He is particularly anxious to defend himself from the attacks made against him, on account of his frequent and minute details of love adventures, and the pains which he had taken to please the fair sex. In his vindication, he relates a story to show that the admiration of female beauty is implanted in the mind by the hand of nature, and cannot be eradicated by force of education. A Florentine, called Filippo Balducci, having lost

[1] Di coloro gli cui amori ebbero infelice fine.

his wife, renounced the world, and retired to Mount *Asinaio* with his son, who was only two years of age. Here the boy was brought up in fasting and prayer, saw no human being but his father, and heard of no secular pleasures. When he had reached the age of eighteen, the hermit, in his quest for alms, takes him to Florence, that he might afterwards know the road, should there be occasion to send him. This young man admires the palaces, and all the sights he beheld in that splendid city; but at length perceiving a troop of beautiful women, asks what they were. His father bids him cast down his eyes and not look at them, and, being unwilling to term them by their proper name, added, that they were called goslings (Papere.) The youth pays no farther attention to the other ornaments of Florence, but insists that he should be allowed to take a gosling with him to the hermitage.

This story is nearly the same with the 13th of the Cento Novelle Antiche, where a king's son having been confined from his infancy for ten years, without seeing the sun, on account of an astrological prediction, at the end of that period has all the splendid and beautiful objects of the universe placed before him, and among others a

number of ladies, who were termed demons in the showman's nomenclature. Being asked which of all chiefly pleased him, he answers, that to him the demons were by far the most agreeable. This tale is in the Seven Wise Masters of Hebers; but it may be traced higher than either his metrical production, or the Cento Novelle Antiche. In one of the parables of the spiritual romance of Josaphat and Barlaam, we are told that a king had an only son, and it was declared by the physicians, as soon as he was born, that if allowed to see the sun or any fire, before he attained the age of twelve, he would become blind. The king commanded an apartment to be hewn within a rock, into which no light could enter. There he shut up the boy totally in the dark, but with proper attendants, for twelve years, at the end of which period he brought him forth from his gloomy chamber, and placed in his view women, gold, precious stones, rich garments, chariots of exquisite workmanship drawn by horses with golden bridles, heaps of purple tapestry, and armed knights on horseback. These were all distinctly pointed out to the youth, but being most pleased with the damsels, he desired to know by what name they were called. An attendant of the king jocosely told him, that they were devils who caught men. Being afterwards brought

before his majesty, and asked which of all the fine things he had seen he liked best, he replied,— "Devils who catch men."

After this introductory tale, Boccaccio commences the regular series of novels of the Fourth Day, which are the most mournful, and, I think, the least interesting in his work.

1. Ghismonda, only daughter and heiress of Tancred, prince of Salerno, becomes enamoured of Guiscardo, one of her father's pages. She reveals her passion, and introduces him to her apartment, through a secret grotto with which it communicated. During one of the interviews of the lovers, Tancred is accidentally concealed in the chamber of his daughter, and the unfortunate pair depart without suspecting that he had been witness to their crime. Next day the prince upbraids Ghismonda with her conduct. She returns a spirited answer, declaiming on the power of love, and the superiority of merit over the advantages of birth, in a tone of high and impassioned eloquence. In order to bring her to a more sober way of thinking, Tancred sends her Guiscardo's heart in a golden cup. The princess, aware of the fate he would undergo, had already distilled a juice from poisonous herbs, which she drinks off after having poured it on the heart of her lover.

In this tale, the violence of character attributed to Ghismonda may perhaps appear to be overwrought; but she was precisely in that situation in which the soul acquires a supernatural strength and the excessive severity of her father naturally turned into the channel of resistance those feelings, which might otherwise have fluctuated in remorse and in shame.[1]

No tale of Boccaccio has been so often translated and imitated as the above: it was translated into Latin prose by Leonard Aretine, into Latin elegiac verse by Filippo Beroald, the commentator on Apuleius, and into Italian ottava rima by Annibal Guasco de Alessandrus. It forms the subject of not fewer than five Italian tragedies; one of which, La Gismonda, obtained a momentary fame, from being falsely attributed by its real author to Torquato Tasso. An English drama by Robert Wilmot, which is also founded on this story, was acted before Queen Elizabeth at the Inner Temple, in 1568. (Dodsley's Collection of Old Plays, vol. ii.) The story appeared in French verse by Jean Fleury, and in the English octave stanza by William Walter, a poet of the reign of Henry VII. In this country it is best known

[1] Scott's Dryden, vol. XI.

through the Sigismunda and Guiscardo of Dryden. Mr Scott has remarked in his late edition of Dryden's works, "that the English poet has grafted one gross fault on his original, by representing the love of Sigismunda, as that of temperament, not of affection:" but then the English poet has sanctioned the union of the lovers by a marriage, private indeed and rapid, but which is altogether omitted in the Decameron. The old English ballad of Sir Cauline and the daughter of the king of Ireland,[1] has a strong resemblance to this novel of Boccaccio, in the secret meeting of the lovers, and discovery of their transgression; the catastrophe, however, is entirely different. The fine arts have also added lustre and celebrity to the tale. There is a beautiful painting, attributed to Correggio, in which Sigismunda is represented weeping over the heart of her lover. It was this picture that Hogarth tried to copy and rival, an attempt for which he was severely ridiculed. "The Sigismunda of Hogarth," says Horace Walpole, "is the representation of a maudlin strumpet, just turned out of keeping, with eyes red with rage, tearing off the ornaments her keeper had

[1] Percy's Relics, vol. I. p. 50.

given her."—See also Churchill's Epistle to Hogarth.

2. The bad character of Alberto da Imola had become too notorious to allow him to remain in his native city. He therefore removed to Venice, the receptacle, as Boccaccio terms it, of all sorts of wickedness, where he became a friar, and soon fell in love with one of his penitents, the wife of a merchant, who was at that time from home. Having discovered her to be a woman of inordinate vanity, he informs her that the angel Gabriel had appeared to him, revealed the passion he had long entertained, and announced his intention of paying her an amatory visit, in any human shape she might command him to assume. Alberto at the same time prevails on her to give a preference to his figure. Accordingly, in the character of Gabriel, Alberto pays many visits to his mistress, but the lady at last boasts of her gallant to an acquaintance, by which means the report reaches her brothers, who resolve to intercept the archangel. At his next interview he is obliged to leave his wings behind him, and to leap over a window into a canal, whence he seeks refuge in a cottage in the neighbourhood. Next day his host, having discovered the story of the angel, informs

Alberto, that, at an ensuing festival, each citizen is to take some one dressed up as a bear, or wild man, to St Mark's Place, as to a hunt, and that when the diversion is over, the conductor may lead away the person he brings to what quarter he pleases. Alberto, seeing no other mode of escaping unknown from Venice, resolves to attend his host in the disguise of a savage. On the appointed day he is accordingly brought forth in this equipment, but his treacherous friend pulls off his vizard in the most public part of the city, and proclaims him to be the pretended angel. He is in consequence pursued by the hue and cry of the mob, and the intelligence having at last reached the brothers of the deluded lady, he is thrown into prison, where he soon after dies.

The numerous tales founded on that species of seduction, practised by Alberto da Imola, may have originated in the incident related in all the romances concerning Alexander the Great, where Nectanebus predicts to Olimpias, that she is destined to have a son by Ammon, and afterwards enjoys the queen under the appearance of that divinity. But they have more probably been derived from the story related by Josephus, (lib. 18. c. 13,) of Mundus, a Roman knight, in the reign of Tiberius, who, having fallen in love with Paul-

ina, wife of Saturninus, bribed a priestess of Isis, to whose worship Paulina was addicted, to inform her that the god Anubis, being enamoured of her charms, had desired her to come to him. In the evening she accordingly proceeded to the temple, where she was met by Mundus, who personated the Egyptian divinity. Next morning she boasted of her interview with Anubis, to all her acquaintance, who suspected some trick of priestcraft; and the deceit having come to the knowledge of Tiberius, he ordered the temple of Isis to be demolished, and her priests to be crucified. Similar deceptions are also common in eastern stories. Thus, in the History of Malek, in the Persian Tales, the adventurer of that name, under the resemblance of Mahomet, seduces the princess of Gazna. A fraud of the nature employed by Alberto da Imola is frequent in the French novels and romances, as in L' Amant Salamandre, and the Sylph Husband of Marmontel. It is also said to have been oftner than once practised in France in real life, as appears from the well-known case of Father Girard and Miss Cadiere.

The six following tales are of a melancholy description. They seem for the most part to have had some foundation in real incidents, which occurred a short while previous to the age of the

author, but the details by which they are accompanied, exhibit wonderful knowledge of the heart, and contain many simple touches of natural and picturesque beauty.

9. Two noble gentlemen, who were intimate friends, lived in neighbouring castles in Provence. The name of the one was Gulielmo Rossilione, and of the other, Gulielmo Guardastagno. At length the former suspecting that a criminal intercourse subsisted between his wife and the latter, sent to invite him to his residence, but way-laid and murdered him in a wood, through which the road between the two castles passed. He then opened the breast of his victim, drew out his heart, and carried it home wrapped up in the pennon of his lance. When he alighted from his horse, he gave it to the cook as the heart of a wild boar, commanded him to dress it with his utmost skill, and serve it up to supper. At table the husband pretended want of appetite, and the lady swallowed the whole of the monstrous repast. When not a fragment was left, he informed her that she had feasted on the heart of Guardastagno. The lady, declaring that no other food should ever profane the relics of so noble a knight, threw herself from a casement which was behind her, and was dashed to pieces by the fall.

Some commentators on Boccaccio have believed this tale to be taken from the well-known story of Raoul de Couci, who, while dying of wounds received at the siege of Acre, ordered his heart to be conveyed to his mistress, the lady of Fayel: but this singular present being intercepted in the way, was dressed by command of the exasperated husband, and presented at table to his wife, who, having incautiously partaken of it, vowed never to receive any other nourishment. This incident is related in a chronicle of the time of Philip Augustus, printed by Fauchet in his Recueil de l'Origine de la Langue et Poesie Françoise, Ryme et Romans, 1581, 4to., p. 124. But, as Boccaccio himself informs the reader, that his tale is given according to the relation of the Provenzals (Secondo de che raccontano i Provenzali,) it seems more probable that it is taken from the story of the Provençal poet Cabestan, which is told by Nostradamus in his Lives of the Troubadours. Besides, the story of Cabestan possesses a much closer resemblance to the novel of Boccaccio, than the fiction concerning Raoul de Coucy and the Lady of Fayel; indeed, it precisely corresponds with the Decameron, except in the names, and in the circumstance that the lady stabs herself instead of leaping from the window. The

incident is also told by Vellutello, in his commentary on Petrarch, who mentions Cabestan in the 4th part of his Triumph of Love. Crescimbeni, too, in his annotations on Nostradamus, informs us that he has seen a MS. life of Cabestan in the Vatican, which corresponds in every particular, except the names, with the tale of Boccaccio. Rolland, in his Recherches sur les prerogatives des dames chez les Gaulois, reports, that Cabestan having gained a cause before the court of love, by the eloquence of his advocate, the lady of Raymond of Rossilione, he was allowed to kiss his beautiful counsel by decree of the court. His insisting on this privilege is assigned by the authors, whom Rolland cites, as the principal cause of the atrocious deed that followed. The story, as related in Nostradamus, occurs in the French tales of Jeanne Flore, where there is this epitaph on the lovers :—

O toi, qui passes sur ces bords,
Apprends que ce tombeau recele
Un couple amoureux et fidele,
Et deux coeurs dans un meme corps.

The novels of this day, it has been seen, principally consist of the relation of violent attachments, which terminated fatally. In those of

DAY V. There are chiefly recounted love adventures, which, after unfortunate vicissitudes, come to a happy conclusion.[1]

1. In the island of Cyprus lived a rich man, called Aristippus, to whom fortune had been in every respect favourable, except that one of his sons, though handsome in person, was afflicted with the utmost imbecility of mind. His real name was Galeso, but, on account of his stupidity, he was called Cimon, which, in the language of the country, signified beast. The father, despairing of his improvement, sent him to a country seat, to live with slaves and labourers, to the infinite satisfaction of Cimon. After he had remained there for some time, it chanced that one day, while wandering through a thicket, he perceived a beautiful young woman asleep by the side of a fountain: he long gazed in stupid admiration, and when she awakened he conducted her home; but after this he returned not to the farm, but to his father's mansion. Love, in piercing his heart, effected what had been in vain attempted by his instructors; he applied himself assiduously to study, and in the space of four years became a

[1] Di cio che ad alcuno amante, dopo alcuni fieri o sventurati accidenti, felicemente avenisse.

profound philosopher, and an accomplished gentleman. At the end of this period he asked Iphigenia, (for that was the name of the young lady whose beauty had performed such wonders) in marriage from her father, but learned that she had been affianced to Pasimunda, a young man of Rhodes. Cimon waited for the time when she was to sail for that island. He then armed a ship, manned it with some of his companions, and attacked the vessel which conveyed Iphigenia to her intended husband. Having obtained possession of his mistress, he set sail with her for Crete; but a storm having arisen, he was forced into a bay in the island of Rhodes, where his ship was recognised by the sailors of the vessel he had so lately attacked. Cimon and his friends were in consequence cast into prison, where they remained, while preparations were making for the nuptials of Pasimunda with Iphigenia, and also of a brother of Pasimunda with Cassandra, a young lady of Rhodes. Now Lisimachus, the chief magistrate of the island, happened to be enamoured of Cassandra, and resolved to carry her off by force. Having accordingly prepared a vessel, he associated Cimon in his enterprise. These lovers accordingly attacked the house of Pasimunda, du-

ring the celebration of the marriage, and having murdered the bridegrooms, they sailed with the brides for the island of Crete. There they remained till the matter was hushed up, when Lisimachus returned to Rhodes with Cassandra, and Cimon carried Iphigenia to Cyprus.

In this novel, which is one of those that have added most to the reputation of the Decameron, the author's object seems to have been to exhibit an example of the power of the gentler affections, in refining the human mind. Such a picture would have been more pleasing, though perhaps less natural, than the representation actually given of the transition from an idiot to a ruffian: For it cannot be denied, that the expedients by which Cimon gets possession of a woman, who felt for him no reciprocal attachment, are merely rape and murder. It has also been well remarked,[1] that the continuation of the narrative bears no reference to the sudden reformation of Cimon, the striking and original incident with which the tale commences. Cimon might have carried off Iphigenia, and all the changes of fortune which afterwards take place might have happened, though his love had com-

[1] Scott's Dryden, vol. XI.

menced in an ordinary manner ; nor is there any thing in his character, or mode of conduct, that reminds us he is such a miraculous instance of the power of love. In short, in the progress of the tale, we entirely lose sight of its striking commencement, nor do we receive much compensation by the introduction of the new actor, Lisimachus, with whose passion, disappointment, and final success we feel little sympathy.

It has been supposed that the original idea of Cimon's conversion is to be found in an Idyllium of Theocritus, entitled Βυκολιστικος ; but it is hardly possible that the novelist could have seen Theocritus at the date of the composition of the Decameron. Boccaccio himself affirms, that he had read the account in the ancient histories of Cyprus ; and Beroaldus, who translated this novel into Latin, also acquaints us that it is taken from the annals of the kingdom of Cyprus,—a fact which that writer might probably have ascertained from his intimacy with Hugo IV., king of that island.

Besides this version by Beroaldus, the above story was translated into stanzas of English verse about the year 1570, and has also been imitated in his Cimon and Iphigenia by Dryden, who has in some degree softened the crimes of Cimon, by

representing Iphigenia as attached to him, and disinclined to a marriage with the Rhodian; which is the reverse of the sentiments she feels in the original. This tale has also formed the subject of a celebrated musical entertainment.

3. Though an insipid story in itself, is curious, as presenting us with the rudiments of a modern romance, of the school of Mrs Radcliffe.

4. Lizio da Valbona, a gentleman of Romagna, had a daughter called Caterina, who, on pretence that she could not sleep in her own apartment, from the sultriness of the weather, insists with her parents on having a bed prepared in a gallery, which communicated with the garden, that she might be refreshed by breathing cool air, and listening to the song of the nightingale. All this was a stratagem, that she might procure an interview with a young man, called Manardi, of whom she was enamoured. Towards morning the lovers fall asleep, and are thus discovered by the father, who comes to inquire if the song of the nightingale had contributed to his daughter's repose. He gives the choice of instant death, or a legal union with Caterina, to Manardi, who prefers the latter alternative.

The characters in this tale are mentioned by

Dante in his Purgatory. A Spirit, complaining of the degeneracy of the Italians, exclaims

" Ov' é 'l Buon Lizio e Arrigo Manardi."—C. 14.

This demonstrates the existence of these persons, whence Manni in his Commentary infers, according to his usual process of reasoning, that the incident related by Boccaccio must have actually occurred. In fact, however, it is derived from one of the ancient Armorican tales of Marie, entitled Lai de *Laustic*, which, in the Breton language, signified a nightingale. There a lady, during the warm nights of summer, used to leave her husband's side, and repair to a balcony, where she remained till dawn of day, on pretence of being allured by the sweet voice of the nightingale ; but, in reality, to enjoy the society of a lover, who resided in the neighbourhood.

I know of no version or imitation of this tale of Boccaccio, except Le Rossignol, usually published in the Contes et Nouvelles of Fontaine, and written in his manner, but of which I believe he was not the author.

5. This story is related by Tonducci, in his History of Faenza, and it had been formerly told in

an old Latin chronicle. The Italian writers think that it would form a fine subject for the plot of a comedy, and it no doubt bears a considerable resemblance to the incidents in the plays of Terence, as also to the Incognita of Goldoni.

6. Seems partly an historical tale; it is uninteresting in itself, but contains an incident which appears to have suggested to Tasso the punishment of Olindo and Sophronia, who are tied back to back to a stake, and are about to be burned in this posture, when rescued by the arrival and intercession of Clorinda. In the Decameron, Gianni di Procida being detected in an intrigue with a young lady, of whom he had been formerly enamoured, but who was then the mistress of Frederic, king of Sicily, the criminals are sentenced to be consumed, while tied to a stake, in a similar position with the lovers in the Jerusalem. But when they were already bound, and when the faggots were about to be lighted, they were delivered by the unexpected coming of Ruggieri dell Oria, the high admiral, who intercedes for them with the king. The desire, too, expressed by the lover in the Decameron, of a change of position, has been beautifully imitated by the Italian poet. Gianni di Procida exclaims, when the sentence is about to be executed,—"Io veggio, che io debbo,

e tostamente morire; voglio adunque di gracia, che come io son con questa giovane, con le reni a lei voltato, e ella a me, che noi siamo co 'visi l'uno all' altro rivolti; accioche morendo io, vedendo il viso suo, ne possa andar consolato."

In like manner Olindo calls out in the crisis of his fate,—

" Ed Oh mia morte avventurosa appieno,
Oh fortunati miei dolci martiri,
S' impetrero che giunto seno a seno
L' anima mia ne la tua bocca io spiri!
E venendo tu meco a un tempo meno
In me fuor mandi gli ultimi sospiri."

Gerus, Lib. c. 2.

7. Amerigo de Trapani, who lived in the time of the good King William of Sicily, purchased for his service a number of slaves, out of a Genoese vessel which had just returned from the coast of Armenia. One of these, called Theodore, at that time almost a child, became, as he grew up, a great favourite of Amerigo; was released from a servile condition, and at length admitted to his master's table. Violante, the daughter of Amerigo, falls in love with him, and is soon in a situation which requires retirement. She is accordingly sent by her mother to a country seat

belonging to the family, but without her father's knowledge of the cause. He discovers the truth, however, by going to this villa at a most critical moment, and compels his daughter to reveal the name of the father of the child to which she was giving birth. At his return to the city, Amerigo procures sentence of death to be passed on Theodore, and despatches a confidential assassin to his daughter, with the choice of a dagger or phial of poison. Theodore, on his way to the place of execution, is recognised as his son by an Armenian ambassador, then residing in Sicily, who procures his pardon, on condition that he should espouse the lady whom he had seduced. Her lover then hastens to the country seat, and fortunately arrives before his mistress had been compelled to make choice of dying by the poison or dagger. Such marvellous recognisances as that in the above novel were frequent in old stories. The tale is in itself indifferent, and is chiefly curious, as being the foundation of the plot of Beaumont and Fletcher's Triumph of Love, the second and best of their Four Plays in One. The drama, however, only commences when the lady is on the verge of her *accouchement*. A rival is also conjured up to the lover Girard, in the person of his brother, and both at length prove to be children of the duke of Milan.

8. Nastagio, a young man of great wealth in the city of Ravenna, was deeply enamoured of a lady of the family of Traversari, who rejected his proposals of marriage, and treated him with much harshness and disdain. As he was in danger of consuming his fortune in fruitless attempts to soften her cruelty, he is advised by his friends to travel to some distant country, with a view of extinguishing his passion. After making preparations, as for a long journey, he leaves Ravenna, but proceeds no farther than his country seat at Chiassi, which was about three miles distant from the city. One day during his residence there, while wandering through a wood, lost in deep meditation, he is surprised by the uncouth spectacle of a lady in total deshabille, flying through the thickets with dreadful screams, pursued by two hounds and a grisly knight, who rode on a black steed, and bore a drawn sword in his hand. Nastagio attempts to oppose this unhandsome procedure, but is warned by the huntsman not to impede the course of divine justice. The knight then reveals to Nastagio, that, in despair at that lady's cruelty whom he was now pursuing, he had slain himself with the sword he held in his hand, and that his mistress dying soon after, she was condemned to be hunted down

in this manner every Friday, for a long course of years, by her rejected lover. By this time the visionary victim is overtaken by the mastiffs. She is pierced with the rapier by the knight, her heart is torn out, and is immediately devoured by the dogs. As soon as she is completely dismembered, she starts up as if she had sustained no injury, and again flies before her infernal pursuer. Nastagio resolves to turn this goblin scene to his advantage; —he asks his stubborn mistress and her family to dine with him on the following Friday, and the invitation being accepted, he prepares an entertainment in the grove where he had lately witnessed the supernatural tragedy. Towards the end of the repast the troop of spirits appear, and the avenging knight relates his story to the terrified assembly. The lady, in particular, appalled at this dreadful warning, accepts the hand of her formerly rejected lover.

We are informed in a note, by the persons employed for the correction of the Decameron, that this tale is taken, with a variation merely in the names, from a chronicle written by Helinandus, a French monk of the 13th century, which comprises a history of the world from the creation to the author's time.

This story, which seems to be the origin of all retributory spectres, was translated in 1569 into English verse, by Christopher Tye, under the title of "A Notable Historye of Nastagio and Traversari, no less pitiefull than pleasaunt." He has chosen the psalm measure which he used in paraphrasing the Acts of the Apostles:—

> "He sawe approche with swiftie foot
> The place where he did staye,
> A dame with scattered heares untrussed,
> Bereft of her araye.
> Besides all this two mastiffs great," &c.

It is not impossible that such old translations, now obsolete and forgotten, may have suggested to Dryden's notice those stories of Boccaccio which he has chosen. Sigismunda and Guiscard, as well as Cimon and Iphigenia, had appeared in old English rhyme before they received embellishment from his genius. In his Theodore and Honoria he has adorned the above story with all the charms of versification, and converted what he found an idle tale, into a beautiful poem. The supernatural agency, as well as the feelings of those present at Nastagio's entertainment, are managed with wonderful skill, and it seems on the whole the best ex-

ecuted of the three novels which he has selected from the Decameron.

9. Is the Faucon of Fontaine. Of this story it has been remarked, "that as a picture of the habitual workings of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost entirely on itself, without the violent excitement of opposing duties or untoward circumstances, nothing ever came up to the story of Federico and his Falcon. The perseverance in attachment, the spirit of gallantry and generosity displayed in it, has no parallel in the history of heroical sacrifices. The feeling is so unconscious too and involuntary, is brought out in such small, unlooked-for, and unostentatious circumstances, as to show it to have been woven into the very nature and soul of the author."

10. Part of this tale, which cannot be extracted, is taken from the 9th book of Apuleius. It also bears a strong resemblance to the 31st and 33d novels of Girolamo Morlini.

The tales in

DAY VI. principally consist of bon mots, repartees, or ready answers, which relieve from some danger or embarrassment;[1] thus, for instance, in the

[1] Di chi con alcuno leggiadro motto tentato si riscotesse;

4. Currado, a citizen of Florence, having one day taken a crane with his hawk, sent it to his cook to be dressed for supper. After it had been roasted, the cook yielded to the importunities of one of his sweethearts, and gave her a leg of the crane. His master is greatly incensed at seeing the bird served up in this mutilated form. The cook being sent for, excuses himself by asserting that cranes have only one leg. On hearing this Currado is still farther exasperated, and commands him to produce a live crane with only one leg, or expect the severest punishment. Next morning the cook, accompanied by his master, sets out in quest of this *rara avis*, trembling all the way with terror, and fancying every thing he sees to be a crane with two legs. At length he is relieved from his anxiety, when, coming to a river, he perceives a number of cranes standing on the brink on one leg, the other being drawn in, as is their custom. "Now, master," says he, "look at these; did not I speak truth?" "Stay a while," replies Currado, and then riding nearer, he cries out, "Shough! Shough!" with all his might, on which they flew away with both legs extended. "What say you

o con pronta risposta o avedimento, fuggissi perdita, pericolo, o scorno.

now, have they not two legs?" "Yes, yes," answered the cook, "but you did not shout out last night to the crane that was at supper, as you have done to these, or questionless it would have put down its other leg like its fellows."

10. Is the only tale of this day which does not consist in a mere expression. Friar Cipolla, of the order of St Anthony, was accustomed to go once a-year to Certaldo, to gather contributions. In this he was usually very successful, owing to the wealth and credulity of the people of that district. While there, as usual, in the month of August, he took an opportunity one Sunday morning, when all the inhabitants were assembled to hear mass, to solicit their attendance on the following day at the church-door, to contribute their mite to the poor brethren of St Anthony. He also informed them he would preach a sermon, and exhibit a most precious relic—a feather of the angel Gabriel, which he had dropped in the chamber of the Virgin, when he came to her at the annunciation in Nazareth. The friar being of a jovial disposition, had two bottle companions in Certaldo, who happened to be present, and resolved to play him some mischief. As he went abroad to dinner that day, they easily got access to his room, where they found a wallet, and in it a casket wrapped up in

silk, which contained the feather of a parrot, a bird at that time scarcely known in Italy. They carried off this feather, which was intended to pass for that of the angel, and, substituting some coals in its place, left all things apparently as they had found them. Next day an immense multitude being assembled, the friar sent for his wallet: having commenced his sermon, he discoursed at great length on the wonders of the relic he possessed, but when he came to the exhibition, he was somewhat disconcerted at finding the coals in place of the feather; yet, without changing countenance, he shut the casket, and exclaimed, "May the power of God be praised!" Then addressing his audience, he informed them that in his youth he had been sent by his superior into the east. He gave a long account of his travels as far as India, and told how on his return he had visited the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had shown him innumerable relics: among others, a lock of the hair of the seraph that appeared to St Francis, a paring of the cherub's nail, a few of the rays of the blessed star that guided the Magi in the east, a vial filled with the sweat which dropped from St Michael when he combated with the devil, the jaw-bone of Lazarus, &c. But of all the relics, he had chiefly admired the feather of the angel

Gabriel, and the coals that roasted St Lawrence, with which the patriarch had in consequence been pleased to present him. These holy gifts had been packed up in caskets resembling each other, and it had been the will of God to bring the one which contained the coals, instead of that with the feather; but the substitution, he continued, was a fortunate thing for Certaldo, for whoever was marked by these coals with the sign of the cross, would be secure against injury by fire for the rest of the year. The credulous multitude were satisfied with this explanation, and contributed a large sum to be signed with the imaginary relics.

This tale of Boccaccio drew down the censure of the Council of Trent, and is the one which gave greatest umbrage to the church. The author has been defended by his commentators, on the ground that he did not intend to censure the respectable orders of friars, but to expose those wandering mendicants who supported themselves by imposing on the credulity of the people; that he did not mean to ridicule the sacred relics of the church, but those which were believed so in consequence of the fraud and artifice of monks.

In Chaucer's Canterbury Tales there is a similar satire on ludicrous relics. The Pardonere, who had just arrived from Rome, carried in his

wallet, along with other treasures of a like description, part of the sail of St Peter's ship, and the veil of the Virgin Mary:—

> "And with these relikes, whanne that he fond
> A poure persone dwelling up on lond,
> Upon a day he gat him more moneie
> Than that the persone gat in monethes tweie."

A catalogue of relics, rivalling in absurdity those of Chaucer's Pardonere, or Boccaccio's Cipolla, is presented in Sir David Lindsay's Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis. In the 38th chapter of Stephens' Apology for Herodotus, we are told that a priest of Genoa returning from the Levant, boasted that he had brought from Bethlehem the breath of our Saviour in a vial, and from Sinai the horns which Moses wore when he descended from that mountain. If we may believe the Colloquia Mensalia of Luther, that great reformer told that the bishop of Mentz pretended to possess the flames of the bush which Moses beheld burning!

The sixth day concludes with a description of a valley, in which the ladies pass some part of the day. It was of a circular form, encompassed by six hills, on each of which stood a palace built in form of a castle. Those sides that sloped to the south, were covered with vines, olives, and every

species of fruit-tree; those that looked towards the north, were planted with oaks and ashes. The vale itself was full of cypress trees and laurels, through which no sunbeam could dart on the flower-spangled ground. But what was chiefly delightful, a stream issued through a valley which divided two of the hills, and, rushing over a rock, made an agreeable murmur, while the drops that were sprinkled shone to the eye like silver; it thence flowed in a clear and tranquil channel, till it was at length received into a pebbly bason in the midst of the plain.

DAY VII. Is appropriated to stories of tricks or stratagems, which women from love, or for their own security, have put on their husbands, whether they were detected or not.[1]

2. A young woman of Naples brought a gallant to her house one morning, while her husband was out at work. The object of the lover's visit was not accomplished when the husband unexpectedly returned; he knocked at the door, which he found bolted, and internally commended his wife for her vigilance and sobriety. She, on hearing him at

[1] Delle beffe, lequali o per amore, o per salvamento di loro, le donne hanno gia fatte a suoi mariti senza essersene adveduti, o si.

the entrance, conceals the young man in a tub, and running down to meet her husband, upbraids him with his idleness. He answers, that he had forgotten it was the festival of St Galeone, but that she would not want for bread, as he had disposed of the tub since he went out for five shillings (Gigliate). The wife, with great readiness, says she had just sold it for seven. On hearing these words, the gallant instantly throws himself out of the vat, assumes the character of the purchaser, and agrees to take it at the price mentioned, provided it be first well scoured. The husband gets into the barrel, in order to scrub it, and while he was thus occupied—

> Notre couple, ayant reprit courage,
> Reprit aussi le fil de l'entretien.

This tale has been translated by Boccaccio from a story which may be found near the beginning of the ninth book of Apuleius. It is the Cuvier of Fontaine.

3. Is one of a good many novels in the Decameron, in which married women are seduced by monks, who were godfathers to their children (*compare*);—a connection which in Italy seems to have given access to the bosom of families, and placed familiarity beyond suspicion.

4. A rich man in Arezzo is jealous of his wife. She contrives to make him habitually drunk at night, and while he is thus intoxicated she goes out to a gallant. At length the husband distrusting her motives, in thus encouraging his evil propensity, pretends on one occasion to be drunk when perfectly sober. His wife went abroad according to custom; but when she returns she finds the door locked, and on her husband refusing to open it, throws a stone into a well. The man thinking she had drowned herself, and fearing that he might be accused of the murder, runs to her assistance. Meanwhile she gets into the house, and shuts him out in turn. She loads him with abuse, and a crowd being gathered, he is exposed as a dissipated wretch to all his neighbours, and among others to the relations of his wife. This tale is the origin of the Calandra of the Cardinal Bibbiena, the best comedy that appeared in Italy previous to the time of Goldoni: it also forms the ground-work of one of Dancourt's plays, and probably suggested to Moliere the plot of his celebrated comedy, George Dandin. The story, however, had been frequently told before the time of Boccaccio, being one of the Fabliaux of the Trouveurs, published by Le Grand (vol. iii. p. 143). It appears in the still more ancient tales of Petrus

Alphonsus, which have been so frequently mentioned, and in one of the French versions of Dolopatos, or the Seven Wise Masters. It does not occur, however, in Syntipas, the Greek form of that romance, nor in the French version of Hebers, but only in that of the anonymous Trouveur.

5. A merchant in Ariminio being immoderately jealous of his wife, confines her closely at home in the most grievous restraint. She contrives, nevertheless, to enter into correspondence with a young man, called Philip, who lived in the adjoining building, by means of a chink in the partition between a retired part of her own house and Philip's chamber. On the day before the Christmas festival, the lady informs the merchant that she means to go on the following morning to church, to confess her sins to a priest. Her husband inquires what sins she has to acknowledge. She replies that she has a great many, but that she would reveal them to no other than a priest. This mystery inflaming the jealousy of the husband, he repairs to the church where his wife intended to confess: having agreed with the chaplain, he puts on the disguise of a friar, and is ready on the following morning to receive the expected penitent. The

lady instantly recognizes her husband, but, dissembling her knowledge, feigns a story that she is beloved by a priest, who comes to her every night while her husband is asleep, and that he possesses a power which neither locks nor bolts can resist. That evening the husband tells his wife he is going abroad to supper, but lies in wait all night in a ground room, to observe the expected coming of the priest. While thus employed, the lady introduces her lover by the secret way into her chamber. The same thing is repeated during a number of nights; but the husband at length, tired with watching, insists on learning the name of the priest of whom she is enamoured. His wife then cures him of jealousy, by assuring him that she had discovered his stratagem, and that he was the priest to whom she alluded in her confession.

This story seems to have been suggested by the Fabliau, Du Chevalier qui confessa sa femme. There a lady being sick, shows a most earnest desire to see a confessor. Her husband wondering at this anxiety, disguises himself as a priest, and hears a confession of an intrigue with his nephew, who lived in the house. He immediately turns his relative out of doors, and on her recovery reproaches his wife with her conduct. She replies, laughing, that she had detected his trick, and had

taken that mode of at once avenging herself for such injurious suspicions, and of getting rid of his nephew, who was burdensome to the family. It is not easy to understand, from the abridgement of Le Grand, whether this explanation was an ingenious device on the part of the lady to conceal her gallantries, or whether she had really acted from the motives she avowed. The modern imitations correspond more closely with the Decameron than with the original Fabliau. In the 78th of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, entitled Le Mari Confesseur, a lady, who is confessed by her husband in the disguise of a priest, acknowledges a criminal intercourse with a squire, a knight, and a priest. On hearing this the husband bursts out into an indignant exclamation. "Were you not," says she, with some presence of mind, "a squire when I married you, were you not afterwards a knight, and are you not now a priest?" This is copied by Fontaine in Le Mari Confesseur. In Bandello, (Nov. 9. par. 1.) the husband suborns the priest to hear the confession of his wife, and stabs her on its being reported to him, which cuts out the ingenuity and readiness of the wife's reply. "Compare," says Le Grand, in a tone of exultation, "this Italian story of assassination with the French Fabliau, and see with what truth nations uninten-

tionally paint their manners." Malespini, however, though an Italian novelist, has adhered in his 92d tale to the incidents of the Fabliau. In the tales of Doni, the wife has an intrigue with a page during her husband's absence. Being detected by a neighbouring baron, she bribes him to silence by granting him the same favours; she again permits herself to be discovered by a priest, and purchases secrecy by a similar compliance: she is confessed by her husband on his return, and having inadvertently acknowledged her triple transgression, she gets off by reminding her husband, that though now a baron, he had been formerly the king's page, and was at that moment a priest.

6. The wife of a Florentine gentleman had two lovers. To the one, called Leonetto, she was much attached; but the other, Lambertuccio, only procured her good-will by the power which he possessed, in consequence of his high rank and influence, of doing her injury. While residing at a country seat, the husband of this lady left her for a few days, and on his departure she sent for Leonetto to bear her company. Lambertuccio also hearing of the absence of the husband, came to the villa soon after the arrival of her favoured lover. Scarcely had Leonetto been concealed, and Lambertuccio occupied his place, when the husband

unexpectedly knocked at the outer gate. At the earnest entreaty of his mistress, Lambertuccio runs down with a drawn sword in his hand, and rushes out of the house, exclaiming,— "If ever I meet the villain again!"——Leonetto is then brought forth from concealment, and the husband is informed, and believes, that he had sought refuge in his villa from the fury of Lambertuccio, who, having met him on the road, had pursued him with an intention of putting him to death.

The original of this story is a tale in the Greek Syntipas, the most ancient European form of the Seven Wise Masters, but it has been omitted in some of the more modern versions. In Syntipas, a Greek officer having an intrigue with a married woman, sends his slave to announce his intention of paying her a visit. The lady, however, is so much pleased with the messenger, that she receives him in place of his master; and the officer, becoming impatient at the delay, proceeds without farther ceremony to the house of his mistress. On his sudden approach, the lady has just time to conceal the slave, and then to receive her lover with assumed delight. While occupied with him, the husband knocks at the gate. Hearing this the lady places a drawn sword in the hand of her lover, and directs him to rush out, venting

loud execrations. Having complied with her injunction, she informs the husband that he had come to the house in a paroxysm of fury, in search of a slave who had sought shelter with her, and whom, from principles of humanity, she had concealed from his resentment. After seeing the officer far off, the husband draws forth the young slave from his concealment, assuring him he need be under no further apprehensions, as his master was already at a great distance. (Mem. de M. Dacier dans Les Mem. des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, vol. xli.) In the Tales of Petrus Alphonsus there is a similar story of a mother, who puts a sword into the hand of her daughter's gallant, and persuades the husband that he had fled to the house to seek refuge from the pursuit of assassins. There are corresponding stories in Le Grand's Fabliaux, (IV. p. 160;) Bandello, (N. 11,) and Parabosco, (N. 16.) One or other of these tales suggested a part of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of Women Pleased, (act ii. scene 6), where Isabella in a similar manner conveys two lovers out of her chamber, when surprised by the coming of her husband.

7. A young man of fortune in France, of the name of Lewis, repaired to Bologna, from a desire to see a lady, called Beatrice, whom he had heard

mentioned as the finest woman in the world. He found that her beauty exceeded even his high expectations, and he became so deeply enamoured, that, with the view of being constantly near her person, he engaged himself as an attendant to her husband. In a short while he proved so acceptable to his master, that he was looked on more as a friend than domestic. One day, on which the husband was abroad hawking, Lewis, while playing at chess with his mistress, revealed his passion, acquainted her with his rank in life, and with all he had done for her sake. The lady took the bold step of desiring him to come at midnight to the apartment in which she slept with her husband. Thither Lewis repaired at the appointed hour, quite uncertain by what means the lady intended to gratify his passion. He was accordingly much dismayed when, on approaching the side of the bed where the lady was, she awakened her husband, and informed him that his servant Lewis had made offer to her of his love, and that if he wished to be satisfied of the truth of her assertion, he might dress himself in her clothes, and go to the pine-tree in the garden, where, in order to secure his conviction, she had agreed to meet him. The credulous husband set out on this errand; Lewis remained some time with the lady, and then,

at her suggestion, went down to the garden with a cudgel in his hand, which he exercised on the husband, feigning to believe that he is punishing the wife, and reviling her all the while for her infidelity. After this the sufferer returned to bed, and deemed the drubbing he had received amply compensated by the assurance now obtained of the fidelity of his servant and chastity of his spouse.

The incidents in this novel are amusing enough, but it does not appear that there was any necessity for the lovers to have had recourse to such intricate and perilous expedients. This tale has been copied by Ser Giovanni in the 2d of the 3d day of his Pecorone, and has given rise to that part of an old English comedy of the 17th century, called the City Night-cap, by John Davenport, which relates to Francisco's intrigue with Dorothea, the wife of Ludovico. It is the Mari cocu. battu, et content, of Fontaine :—

> "Messire Bon eut voulu que le zele
> De son Valet n'eut été jusques la,
> Mais le voyant si sage, et si fidele,
> Le bon hommeau des coups se consola."

8. Sismonda, wife of Ariguccio Berlinghieri, a Florentine merchant, fell on a singular stratagem

to obtain interviews with her gallant. She procured a string, one end of which she tied to her great toe, while the other went out at the window and reached the street. The lover used to pull the cord as a signal of his approach, and if the lady let it go to him, it was understood that he might come in, as this ex ressed that her husband was asleep. Ariguccio observing this string, suspected there was some mystery attached to it, and while his wife was asleep, unloosed it from her toe, and fastened it to his own. It was shortly after tugged by the gallant, on which Ariguccio ran to the entrance, and pursued his rival to a considerable distance. The lady, awakening, conjectured what had happened. She accordingly put out the light, went into another apartment, and bribed one of her waiting-maids to take her place, in order to meet the resentment of her husband, who on his return cut off the hair of the substitute, and disfigured her face with blows. He next went to the house of his wife's brothers, informed them of her conduct, and how he had punished her. They accompanied him home, resolved to take a still more complete vengeance on their guilty sister; but on their arrival they found her sitting at work with perfect composure, neatly apparelled, her face unblemished, and her hair properly or-

dered. As this differed wholly from the account of her husband, they refused to give credit to the other part of their brother-in-law's story, and reviled him bitterly on account of the enormities of which their sister now introduced a plausible detail.

In the 4th novel of this day, we have seen a woman ingeniously justify herself in the sight of her relations, and bring her husband into disgrace; but the incident of the substitution and cutting off the hair, is more ancient than the time of Boccaccio, and seems to have been suggested by the Fabliau of Les Cheveux coupés (Le Grand, v. ii. p. 280), where, however, the intrigue is detected in a different manner from the story in the Decameron. A gallant comes to his mistress's chamber, and the husband, mistaking him for a robber, throws him into a tub, and orders his wife to watch till he runs for a light. The wife allows the gallant to escape, and substitutes a calf in his place. At the return of the husband she is turned out of doors. She bribes a servant to lie down by her husband, who, thinking his wife had come back, cuts off her hair; when the husband falls asleep, she resumes her place, and substitutes the calf's skin in room of the hair, by which means she persuades him in the morning that the whole had

been a dream. This improbable story is perhaps the immediate original of Boccaccio's, but the incidents may be traced as far back as the tales of Bidpai, the oldest collection in the world. In one part of the fable of the Dervise and Robbers, at least as it appears in the version of Galland, a shoemaker's wife being detected in an intrigue, and tied to a pillar, persuades another woman to take her place. The husband rises during night, and cuts off the nose of the substitute. After this catastrophe the wife instantly resumes her position, and addresses a prayer to God to manifest her innocence, by curing her of the wound. The 40th story of the 2d part of Malespini is a similar tale with that of Bidpai; it also occurs in the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, and one or other of these imitations probably suggested the incident in Massinger's Guardian, of Severino cutting off Calipso's nose, mistaking her in the dark for his wife Iolante.

9. Lidia, wife of Nicostrato, one of the richest inhabitants of Argos, became enamoured of an attendant of her husband, named Pyrrhus. By the intervention of a female confidant, she disclosed to him her passion, and solicited a return. Pyrrhus, suspecting that this message was a stratagem to try his fidelity to his master, demanded, before

requiting her affection, that she should kill her husband's favourite hawk, and send him a tuft of his master's beard, as also one of his grinders, in token of her sincerity. All this the lady promised to perform, and added spontaneously, that she would offer her husband in his own presence the most grievous insult he could receive. The two first articles of her engagement she easily fulfilled. She also obtained a tooth, by instructing her husband's pages to turn aside their heads while serving him, and then persuading him that they did so on account of his bad breath, occasioned by a spoiled tooth, which he readily permitted her to draw. In order to perform the voluntary part of her agreement, she went one day into the garden, accompanied by her husband and Pyrrhus. By her direction the latter climbed a pear-tree, whence, to the great surprise of the former, he exclaimed against the immodesty of his conduct with his wife. The husband ascribes this *deceptio visus* to some magical property in the pear-tree, and, ascending to investigate its nature, he attributes to enchantment the intercourse that takes place between his wife and servant.

All that relates to the pear-tree in this tale corresponds precisely with the 4th lesson in chapter 12th of the collection of oriental stories, known

by the name of Bahar-Danush, or Garden of Knowledge.—" The fourth lady having bestowed her attention on the Pilgrim Bramin, despatched him to an orchard, and having gone home, said to her husband, I have heard that in a certain orchard there is a date tree, the fruit of which is of remarkable fine flavour; but what is yet stranger, whoever ascends it sees many wonderful objects. If to-day, going to visit this orchard, we gather dates from this tree, and also see its wonders, it will not be unproductive of amusement. In short, she so worked upon her husband with flattering speeches and caresses, that he went to the orchard, and at the instigation of his wife ascended the tree. At this instant she beckoned to the Bramin, who was previously seated expectantly in a corner of the garden. The husband, from the top of the tree beholding what was not fit to be seen, exclaimed in extreme rage. Ah! thou shameless wretch, what abominable action is this? The wife, making not the least answer, the flames of anger seized the mind of the man, and he began to descend from the tree; when the Bramin, with activity and speed, having hurried over the fourth section of the Tirrea Bede, went his way. The husband, when he saw no person near, was as-

tonished, and said to himself, Certainly this vision must have been miraculous. From the hesitation of her husband, the artful wife guessed the cause, and impudently began to abuse him. Then instantly tying her vest round her waist, she ascended the tree. When she had reached the topmost branch, she suddenly cried out, O! thou shameless man, what abominable action is this? The husband replied, Woman, be silent; for such is the property of the tree, that whoever ascends it sees man or woman below in such situations. The cunning wife now came down, and said to her husband, what a charming garden and amusing spot is this; where one can gather fruit, and at the same time behold the wonders of the world! The husband replied, Destruction seize the wonders which falsely accuse man of wickedness!" (Scott's Bahar-Danush, vol. ii.) It is true, that the Bahar-Danush was not written till long after the age of Boccaccio, but the author Inatulla professes to have borrowed it from the traditions of the Bramins, from whom it may have been translated into the languages of Persia or Arabia, and imported from these regions to Europe by some crusader, like other Asiatic romances, which have served as the ground-work of so many of our old

stories and poems. Indeed, I have been informed by an eminent oriental scholar, that the above story of the Bahar-Danush exists in a Hindu work, which he believes prior to the age of Boccaccio. That part of the tale in the Decameron, which relates to the stratagem by which the lady obtains a tooth from her husband, seems to have been suggested either by the Conte Devot d'un roi qui voulut faire bruler le fils de son seneschal, or the 68th story of the Cento Novelle Antiche, which is copied from the French tale, (see above, vol. ii. p. 219.) The incidents in the novel of Boccaccio concerning the pear-tree form the second story in Fontaine's La Gageure des trois Commeres. They have also some resemblance to the Merchant's Tale in Chaucer, and by consequence to Pope's January and May.

At the conclusion of the seventh day, we are told, that before supper, Dioneo and Fiammetta sung together the story of Palamon and Arcite, which is the subject of Boccaccio's poem The Theseide, Chaucer's Knight's Tale, Fletcher's drama of the Two Noble Kinsmen, in which he is said to have been assisted by Shakspeare, and the Palemon and Arcite of Dryden. Never has fiction or tradition being embellished by such genius.

DAY VIII. contains stories of tricks or stratagems of men to women, of women to men, or of one man to another.[1]

1. A young man of Milan had placed his affections on a lady, the wife of a rich merchant in that city; on declaring to her his attachment, she promised to comply with his wishes for two hundred florins of gold. Shocked at the avarice of his mistress, he borrowed from the husband the sum which he bestowed on the wife. On the departure of the merchant for Genoa, she sent for her lover to bring the money; he arrived, accompanied by a friend, in whose presence he gave her the two hundred florins, desiring her to deliver them to her husband when he should come home. He thus obtained the caresses of his venal mistress, and on the husband's return, informed him that having no farther occasion for the sum he had lately borrowed, he had repaid it to his wife. As she had received it in presence of a witness, she was obliged to refund the money she had so shamefully acquired. This is Chaucer's Shipmanne's Tale, or Story of Dan John: it is Fontaine's A Femme avare Galant escroc. The

[1] Di quelle Beffe che tutto il giorno, o donna ad huomo, o huomo a donna, o l' uno huomo a l' altro si fanno.

above stratagem is attributed to Captain Philip Stafford, in Johnson's Lives of Pirates and Highwaymen. Indeed, that work is full of tricks recorded by Boccaccio, Sabadino, and Sacchetti; which shows that it is a mere invention, unless Johnson's worthies resorted to the Italian novelists for instruction.

2. A priest having fallen in love with the wife of a peasant, goes to the cottage one day in absence of the husband, and obtains whatever he desires from the wife, on depositing his cloak in her hands, as a pledge for payment of a certain sum. The priest afterwards finding that it would be impossible for him to spare the money, but feeling that it was requisite to redeem so essential a part of his dress, sends to his mistress for the loan of her mortar. He returns it with many thanks, at a time he knew her husband would be with her, and desires his messenger to ask for the cloak which had been left as a pledge when the mortar was borrowed. The woman is thus obliged to deliver it up, as she could not assert her right to retain it in presence of her husband.

This tale was probably suggested to the Italian novelist by the first part of the Fabliau du Pres-

tre et de la Dame, though the imitation be not nearly so close as in most of the other tales in which Boccaccio has followed the productions of the Trouveurs. In the Fabliau, a priest, while on an amatory visit to the wife of a burgess, is nearly surprised by the unexpected coming of the husband. His mistress has just time to conceal him in a great basket, which stood in an adjacent apartment; but in the hurry he left his cloak behind him. He had not long remained in the basket, before it occurred to him that it might be applied to better purposes than concealment; taking it in his arms, he returned boldly to the room where the burgess was sitting with his wife, and requested, as he had now brought back the basket, of which he had the loan, that the cloak which he left in pawn should be restored to him. (Fabliaux par Barbazan et Meon, T. 4. p. 181.)

3. The prebendary of Fiesole became enamoured of a widow in his neighbourhood. As he was old, and of disagreeable person, the lady was much distressed by his importunate solicitations. In order to get rid of them, she feigns a readiness to comply with his wishes, and desires him to come to her house on the following evening. The room in which he is received being darkened, she substitutes in her place a waiting-maid of hideous as-

pect. After he had remained for some time, she sends for his bishop. The whole family then burst into the room with lights, and the priest is at the same moment gratified with a view of his superior, and the mistress for whom he had thus sacrificed his reputation.

This story is taken, with little variation, from the Fabliau de Pretre et Alison, of the Trouveur Guillaume le Normand, (Le Grand, 4, p. 297.) It is also the 47th of the 2d part of Bandello.

7. A man of letters, who had studied at Paris, becomes enamoured, on his return to Florence, of a young widow of that city. She is soon made acquainted with his passion, but resolves, as she had another gallant, to turn it into ridicule. One night when she expected her favoured lover, she sends a waiting-maid to direct the scholar to come that evening to the court behind her house, and wait till he be admitted. Here he remains for a long while amid the snow, which had fallen the day before, expecting every moment to be invited in, the widow and her lover laughing all the time at his credulity. An excuse is first sent to him, that the lady's brother is arrived at her house, but that he would not stay long. At length, towards morning, he is informed that he may depart, as the brother had remained all night. The

scholar goes home almost dead with cold, resolving to be revenged for the trick which he now perceives had been played on him. In the course of a few months the lady is deserted by her lover, and applies to the scholar, to recall his affections by magical operations, in which she believes him to be skilful. Pretending to accede to her wishes, the clerk informs her that he will send an image of tin, with which she must bathe herself three times in a river, then ascend naked to the top of some unoccupied building, and remain there till two damsels appear, who will ask what she wishes to have done. Accordingly the lady retires to a farm which she possessed in the country, and having three times immersed herself at midnight in the Arno, she next ascends an uninhabited tower in the vicinity. The scholar, who lay in wait, removes the ladder by which she got up. A long dialogue then follows between them: he reproaches her with the trick she had played him; she begs forgiveness, and entreats to be permitted to descend. This, however, is not granted till the ensuing evening, by which time her skin is all cracked and blistered by the bites of insects and the heat of the sun.

We are informed by some of the commentators on Boccaccio, that the circumstances related in

this story happened to the author himself, and that the widow is the same with the one introduced in his Laberinto d'Amore. The unusual minuteness with which the tale is related gives some countenance to such an opinion; however this may be, it has evidently suggested the story, in the Diable Boiteux, of Patrice, whose mistress, Lusita, makes him remain a whole night in the street before her windows, on the false pretence that her brother, Don Gaspard, is in the house, and that her lover must wait till he depart.

8. Two intimate friends, one called Zeppa, and the other Spinelloccio, both of whom were married, resided in Sienna. Spinelloccio being frequently in the house of Zeppa, fell in love with the wife of his friend. He carried on an intrigue for some time without being detected, but one day the lady, thinking that her husband was abroad, sent for her gallant, and Zeppa saw him enter his wife's apartment. As soon as Spinelloccio returned home, Zeppa upbraided his spouse with her conduct, but agreed to forgive her, provided she would ask her gallant to the house next day, and afterwards shut him into a chest, on pretence of hearing her husband coming. This being executed, Zeppa enters the room where his friend and rival was confined; he next sends for the wife of Spinelloccio, and having informed her of the conduct of her husband

persuades her to a mutual revenge, corresponding to the nature of the offence. Spinelloccio was then drawn from his concealment, "*after which*," says the novelist, "*all parties concerned dined very amicably together, and the same good understanding continued amongst them for the time to come.*"

This story is in the Seven Wise Masters of Hebers, but was probably suggested to Boccaccio by the latter part of the Fabliau Constant du Hamel, (Le Grand, 4, 226.) There a priest, a provost, and a forester, attempt to seduce a peasant's wife. The husband has thus a triple vengeance to execute: But in the Fabliau this revenge was an ungrateful return to the wife, who had not yielded to the solicitations of her lovers, but had contrived to coop them up successively in a tun which held feathers. This Fabliau again probably derived its origin from some oriental tale. In the story of Arouya, in the Persian Tales, a lady, solicited by a cadi, a doctor, and governor, exposes them to each other.

To Persia the story had probably come from the Bramins, as there is a similar incident in the Bahar-Danush, which is founded on their traditions:— "Gohera saw her husband, Houssum, conducted to the Cutwal for examination. She followed, and requested that magistrate to release him; but he refused, unless she would submit to his embraces.

She then went to the Cauzi, and requested his interference; but the judge offered her relief only on the same conditions as the Cutwal. She seemingly consented, and appointed a time for his visit at her lodgings. She then went to the Cutwal, and made also an assignation with that officer. At night the Cauzi comes, bringing with him provisions for a treat, and while feasting is interrupted by a knocking at the door. Fearful of being discovered, he entreats Gohera to conceal him, and she shows him a large jar, into which he creeps, and the lid is fastened upon him. The Cutwal now enters, when, after some time, the door sounds again, and this magistrate is put into a chest, which is locked by Gohera. Next morning she hires porters, and has the grave magistrates carried before the Sultan, who orders them to be severely punished, and Houssum to be released." (Scott's Bahar-Danush, vol. iii. Appendix.) The story in the Decameron is introduced in Fontaine's le Faiseur d' oreilles et le raccommodeur de Moules.

10. " It was," says Boccaccio, " and perhaps is still, the custom in all sea-ports, that traders should lodge their merchandise in a public warehouse, and that an account of the nature and value of the goods should be entered in a register. This re-

cord being open to all, was of great service to the fair damsels of Palermo, who lay in wait to entrap wealthy strangers." Now, a young Florentine, called Salabaetto, was sent by his masters to Sicily, to dispose of some woollen cloth, valued at 500 florins of gold. This young man soon fell under the observation of a woman, styling herself Signora Jancofiore, who sent a waiting-maid to inform him how deeply she was enamoured of his person,[1] and to request him to meet her at one of the public baths. There, and afterwards at her own house, which is described as elegantly fitted up, she personated a lady of rank and fortune. At length, when she had completely fascinated the Florentine, she entered the room, one night while he was at her house, in a flood of tears, and informed him she had just received letters from a brother, acquainting her, that unless she could transmit him a thousand florins within eight days,

[1] Plautus, in his Menechmi, attributes a similar custom to the courtezans of the Mediterranean islands in his day:

> Morem hunc Meretrices habent;
> Ad portum mittunt servulos ancillulas,
> Si qua peregrina navis in portum aderit;
> Rogunt civitatis sit—quid ei nomen siet:
> Post illae extemplo sese adplicent.

he would inevitably lose his head. As she affirmed that she could not procure the whole within the specified time, the Tuscan agreed to lend her 500 florins, which he had just procured by the sale of the woollen cloth. When she had got possession of this sum, she became more shy of admitting him to her house. After waiting a long while for payment of the money, without receiving it, he saw he had been duped; but as he had no proof of the debt, and was afraid to return to Florence, he sailed for Naples. There his friend Camigiano, treasurer of the empress of Constantinople, at that time resided. Having acquainted him with the loss sustained, at the suggestion of Camigiano he re-embarked for Palermo with a great number of casks, which, on his arrival, he entered in the warehouse as being filled with oil: he then resumed his acquaintance with his former mistress, and appeared to be satisfied with her apologies. Jancofiore, who understood that the late importation was valued at two thousand florins, and that her lover expected still more precious commodities, thought herself in the way of a richer prize than she had yet obtained, and repaid the five hundred florins, that the Florentine might entertain no suspicions of her honesty. Then, on pretence that one of his ships had been taken by

corsairs, he procured from her a loan of a thousand florins, on the security of the merchandise which she believed to be in the warehouse, and with this sum he departed to Florence, without the knowledge of his mistress. When she had despaired of his return, she broke open the casks he had left behind, which were now discovered to be filled with salt water, and a little oil on the surface.

The origin of this story may be found in the tales of Petrus Alphonsus. There a certain person lends a sum of money to a treacherous friend, who refuses to repay it. Another person is instructed by the lender to fill some trunks with heavy stones, and offer to deposit this pretended treasure in the hands of the cheat. While the negociation is going on, he who had been defrauded comes to repeat his demand, which the false friend now complies with, lest any suspicion should fall on his honesty in presence of the new dupe. This, like most other stories of Alphonsus, was probably borrowed from the east, as a similar one occurs in the Arabian Nights. From Alphonsus the tale passed to the Trouveurs (Le Grand, Fabliaux, 3. 282,) to the author of the Gesta Romanorum, (c. 118,) and of the Cento Novelle Antiche. Boccaccio probably obtained it from the 74th tale of this last work, where the story, as related by

Petrus Alphonsus, is given as the third example of those, who, trying to be better, lost the whole. "Qui conta de certi che per cercare del meglio perderono il tutto." The novel of Boccaccio has some resemblance to the under-plot of Rule a Wife and have a Wife, where Estifania, a courtezan, insnares Michael Perez by personating a lady of quality, but is herself afterwards cozened with regard to the contents of his caskets.

Day IX. During this day the narrators are allowed to recount stories on any subject they please,[1] but they seem for the most part to have followed the topics of the preceding one.

1. A widow lady in Pistoia had two lovers, the one called Rinuccio, the other Alexander, of whom neither was acceptable to her. At a time when she was harassed by their importunities, a person named Scannadio, of reprobate life and hideous aspect, died and was buried. His death suggested to the lady a mode of getting rid of her lovers, by asking them to perform a service which she thought herself certain they would not undertake. She acquainted Alexander, that the body of Scannadio, for a purpose she would afterwards explain, was to be brought to her dwelling by one of her

[1] Di quello che piu gli aggrada.

kinsmen, and feeling a horror at such an inmate, she would grant him her love, if, attired in the dead garments of Scannadio, he would occupy his place in the coffin, and allow himself to be conveyed to her house in the place of the deceased. To Rinuccio she sent to request that he would bring the corpse of Scannadio at midnight to her habitation. Both lovers, contrary to expectation, agree to fulfil her desires. During night she watches the event, and soon perceives Rinuccio coming along bearing Alexander, who was equipped in the shroud of Scannadio. On the approach of some of the watchmen with a light, Rinuccio throws down his burden and runs off, while Alexander returns home in the dead clothes. Next day each demands the love of his mistress, which she refuses, pretending to believe that no attempt had been made to execute her commands.

In an old English ballad a similar expedient is devised by a prioress, to get rid of her three lovers, a knight, a prelate, and a burgher. She promises her affections to the first, if he will lie all night in a chapel as a dead body, and wrapped in a winding-sheet. Next she requires the parson to say mass over the corpse, which she pretends is that of a cousin who had not been properly interred. She then tells the merchant to bring the

body to her house, as the deceased owed her money, and must not be buried till his friends discharge the debt; and, in order to terrify the priest, she desires that he should equip himself in disguise of the devil. The lovers all meet in the chapel, where both the knight and priest run off, so that the merchant has no corpse to bring home to his mistress. Hence the allotted service being accomplished by none of them, the lady refuses her love to all three. This tale is entitled the Pryorys and her Three Wooyrs, and has been published in Jamieson's Popular Ballads, from a MS. in the British Museum, attributed to Lydgate.

2. Is the Pseautier of Fontaine.

6. A poor man who kept a small hut in the district of Mugnone, near Florence, for the entertainment of travellers, had a comely daughter, called Niccolosa, of whom a young gentleman of Florence, called Pinuccio, became enamoured. As the lover had reason to believe the affection reciprocal, he set out with Adriano, one of his companions, to whom he imparted the secret. He took his way by the plain of Mugnone, and as he contrived to come to the house of Niccolosa's father late in the evening, he had a pretext for insisting on quarters. Pinuccio and his friend were lodged in one of three beds, which were in the same

room: the landlord and his wife lay in the second, and Niccolosa by herself in the remaining one, to which Pinuccio stole when he thought his host and hostess were asleep. Adriano rising soon after, accidentally removes a cradle which stood at the side of the landlord's bed. The hostess next gets up, but when returning to lie down misses the cradle, and thinking she had nearly gone to bed to her guests, she falls into the very error she wished to avoid; and Adriano, whom she mistakes for her husband, has thus no reason to repent his trouble in accompanying his friend to Mugnone. Pinuccio now intending to return to his own bed, being also misled by the cradle, goes to that of the landlord, to whom, as to his friend, he recounts the manner in which he had passed the night. The enraged father discovers himself by his threats, and the hostess hearing the noise, and still fancying herself with her husband, remarks, that their guests are quarrelling. As Adriano thinks proper to reply to this observation, she instantly discovers her mistake, and slips into bed to her daughter. She thence calls to her husband to know what was the matter. On learning the intelligence which he had just received from Pinuccio, she asserts it must be false, as she herself had lain all night with their daughter, and had never closed her eyes. Adriano

overhearing this conversation, calls out to Pinuccio, that it is lamentable he cannot get over that habit of walking and speaking in his sleep. To aid the deception, Pinuccio talks for some time in a manner the most incoherent, and then pretends to awake suddenly. The landlord is thus satisfied, and ever remains unconscious of his double disgrace.

This tale has been taken from an old Fabliau of the Trouveur Jean de Boves, entitled De Gombert et des deux Clercs. There two clerks go to get their corn grinded. The miller pretends to be from home, and while they are seeking him through the wood, he purloins the corn, but without their suspecting him of the theft. The night scene corresponds with the Decameron, except that the cradle is removed intentionally by one of the clerks, in order to entrap the miller's wife: the catastrophe, however, is different; for the miller, during his quarrel with the other clerk, on account of the information he had unconsciously given, strikes a light, and discovers the circumstances in which his wife is placed. He addresses her in terms the most energetic. She answers that what she had done was undesigned, which is more than he can say of stealing the corn. The Reeve's Tale in Chaucer seems to be compounded

of the Fabliau and the novel of Boccaccio. It bears the nearest resemblance to the former, but in one or two incidents is different from both. A miller deprived two clerks of Cambridge of their corn, by letting their horse loose when they came to have it ground. They find it gone when they return from their search of the animal. Suspecting the thief, they come back one evening with the purpose of being revenged. The cradle is intentionally removed by the one clerk, while the other is with the daughter. During the squabble, the miller's wife mistakes her husband for one of the clerks, and knocks him down. He is then soundly beat by the clerks, who ride off with their corn;—a solution by no means so ingenious as that either of the Fabliau or the tale in the Decameron. The story, as related by Boccaccio, has been imitated in the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, and in the Berceau of Fontaine.

9. Two young men repair to Jerusalem to consult Solomon. One asks how he may be well liked, the other how he may best manage a froward wife. Solomon advises the first to love others, and the second to repair to the bridge of Oca. From this last counsel neither can extract any meaning, but it is explained on their road home; for when they come to the bridge of that name, they meet a num-

ber of caravans and mules, and one of these animals being restive, its master forces it on with a stick. The advice of Solomon being now understood, is followed, and with complete success. From all the Italian novelists we hear of this species of discipline being exercised by husbands, and it is always mentioned with approbation. In many of the Fabliaux, as De la dame qui fut corrigée, (Le Grand, 3, 204), the cudgel chiefly is employed for procuring domestic felicity. It may perhaps appear singular, that an age of which the characteristic was veneration for the fair sex, should have given commencement to a long series of jests, founded on the principle, that manual discipline is requisite to correct the evil disposition of some wives, and to support the virtue of others. "La mauvaise femme convient il battre, et bonne aussi, a fin qu' elle ne se change," is a maxim inculcated in the romance of Milles et Amys, which was written in the brightest days of chivalry.

10. This story is taken from the Fabliau of the Trouveur Rutebeuf, De la Demoiselle qui vouloit voler, (Le Grand, vol. iv. p. 316), in which a clerk, while pretending to add wings and feathers to a lady, that she might fly, acts in a similar manner with the priest of Barletta. It is Fontaine's La Jument du compere Pierre.

The stories in

DAY X. Are of those who acted with magnificence or generosity in matters of love, or any thing else.[1]

1. A noble Italian, called Ruggieri, entered into the service of Alphonso, king of Spain. He soon perceives that his majesty is extremely liberal to others, but thinking his own merits not sufficiently rewarded, he asks leave to return to his own country. This the king grants, after presenting him with a fine mule for his journey. Alphonso directs one of his attendants to join him on the road, to note if he make any complaint of the treatment he had received, and, if he should, to command his return. The mule having stopped in a river, and refusing to go on, Ruggieri said she was like the person who gave her. Ruggieri being in consequence brought back to the capital, and his words reported to the king, he is introduced into the presence of his majesty, and asked why he had compared him to the mule; "Because," replied Ruggieri, "the mule would not stop where it ought, but stood still when it should have gone on; in like manner you give where it

[1] Di chi liberalmente, o vero magnificamente alcuna cosa operasse, intorno a fatti d'amore, o d'altra cosa.

is not suitable, and withhold where you ought to bestow." On hearing this, the king carries him into a hall, and shows him two shut coffers, one filled with earth, another containing the crown and sceptre, with a variety of precious stones. Alphonso desires him to take which he pleases; and Ruggieri having accidentally fixed on the one with earth, the king affirms that it is bad fortune that has all along prevented him from being a partaker of the royal benefits. Then having presented him with the valuable chest, he allows him to return to Italy.

The rudiments of this story may be traced as far back as the romance of Josaphat and Barlaam. A king commanded four chests to be made, two of which were covered with gold, and secured by golden locks, but were filled with rotten bones of human carcases. The other two were overlaid with pitch, and bound with rugged cords, but were replenished with precious stones, and ointments of most exquisite odour. Having called his nobles together, the king placed these chests before them, and asked which they deemed most valuable. They pronounced those with the golden coverings to be the most precious, and surveyed the other two with contempt. "I foresaw," said the king, "what would be your determination, for you

look with the eyes of sense; but to discern baseness or value, which are hid within, we must look with the eyes of the mind:" he then ordered the golden chests to be opened, which exhaled an intolerable stench, and filled the beholders with horror. The story next appeared in the 109th chapter of the continental Gesta Romanorum. There an innkeeper found a chest, which he discovered to be full of money. It was claimed by the owner, and the innkeeper, in order to ascertain if it was the will of Providence he should restore it, ordered three pasties to be made. One he filled with earth, the second with bones of dead men, and the third with the money: he gave his choice of these three to the rightful proprietor, who fixed successively on the two with earth and bones, whence the innkeeper drew an inference in his own favour. This story came to Boccaccio, with the farther modifications it had received in the Cento Novelle Antiche. It is related, conformably to the circumstances in the Decameron, both in the Speculum Historiale, and in the Confessio Amantis of Gower, who cites a *cronikil* as his authority for the tale. Thence it passed into the English Gesta Romanorum, where three vessels are exhibited to a lady for her choice, the first of gold, but filled with dead bones; the second

of silver, containing earth and worms; and the last of lead, but replenished with precious stones. It was probably from this last work that Shakspeare adopted the story of the caskets, which forms part of the plot of his Merchant of Venice.

5. Dianora, the wife of a rich man of Udina, in the country of Friuli, in order to get rid of the importunities of her lover Ansaldo, told his emissary that she would requite his affection, if he produced a garden in January, which was then approaching, as fresh and blooming as if it were the month of May. This condition, which the lady conceived impossible to be fulfilled, her lover accomplished by aid of a necromancer. The garden being exhibited to the lady, she went in the utmost distress to her husband, and informed him of the engagement she had come under. As he commanded her at all events to abide by her promise, she waited on Ansaldo, and told him she had come at her husband's desire, to fulfil the agreement. Ansaldo, touched with her affliction and the generosity of her husband, refused this offer; and the necromancer, who happened to be in the house at the time, declined to accept the remuneration which he had stipulated for his services.

Manni observes, that this novel was probably founded on a story current in the age of Boccaccio,

(and subsequently mentioned by Trithemus,) concerning a Jew physician, who, in the year 876, in the middle of winter, caused by enchantment a garden, with trees and flowers in bloom, to appear before a numerous and splendid company. The story, however, of Dianora, as well as the 4th of the present day, had formerly been told by Boccaccio himself, in the 5th book of his Philocopo, which is an account of the loves of Flores and Blancafior. There, among other questions, the comparative merit of the husband and lover is discussed at the court of Naples, when the hero of the romance lands in that country. This story of Boccaccio is the origin of the Frankelein's Tale of Chaucer, in which the circumstances are precisely the same as in the Decameron, except that the impossible thing required by the lady is, that her lover should remove the rocks from the coast of Britany: a similar tale, however, according to Tyrwhitt, occurs in an old Breton lay, from which he conceives the incidents may have come immediately to the English poet. Boccaccio's novel is unquestionably the origin of a story which occupies the whole of the 12th canto of the Orlando Innamorato, and is related by a lady to Rinaldo, while he escorts her on a journey. Iroldo, a Babylonian knight, had a wife, called Tisbina,

who was beloved by a young man of the name of Prasildo. This lady, in order to get rid of her admirer's importunities, offered to requite his affection, provided he should gain admittance to an enchanted garden in a wood, near the confines of Barbary, and bring her a slip of a tree growing there, of which the blossoms were pearls, the fruit emeralds, and the branches gold. The lover sets out on this expedition, and on his way meets an old man, who gives him directions for entering the magic garden with safety, and bestows on him a mirror to drive away the Medusa, by whom it was guarded. By this means Prasildo having accomplished the conditions, returns to Babylon, and the lady is commanded by the husband to fulfil the obligations she had come under. Prasildo, however, declines to take advantage of this compliance, and restores Tisbinia to her lord. But Iroldo, determined not to be outdone in courtesy, insists on resigning his wife to Prasildo, and then leaves Babylon for ever, as he cannot endure to behold even the happiness of which he was himself the author. The tale of Boccaccio is supposed by the editor of Beaumont and Fletcher to be also the origin of the Triumph of Honour, the first of their Four Plays in One; but it is more probable that these dramat-

ists took their plot from the Frankelein's Tale in Chaucer, as the impossible thing required in the Triumph of Honour, by Dorigen from her lover Martius, is that a mass of rocks should be converted into "a champain field."

8. Titus, the son of a Roman patrician, resided during the period of his education at Athens, in the house of Chremes, a friend of his father. A warm and brotherly affection arises betwixt the young Roman and Gisippus, the son of Chremes: They prosecute their studies together, and have no happiness but in each other's society. Gisippus, on the death of his father, being persuaded by his friends to marry, fixes on Sophronia, an Athenian lady of exquisite beauty. Before the day appointed for the celebration of the nuptials, he carries Titus to visit her. The Roman is smitten with an involuntary passion for the intended bride, and, after a long internal struggle, reluctantly discloses his love to Gisippus. This disinterested friend resigns his pretensions, and on the night of the marriage, Sophronia, without her knowledge, receives Titus instead of Gisippus as her husband. The lady and her family are at first greatly exasperated by the deception, but are afterwards pacified, and Sophronia proceeds with Titus to Rome, whither he was now summoned on account of the death of

his father. Some time after this, Gisippus, being reduced to great poverty, repairs to Rome, with the view of receiving succour from his friend; but Titus, not knowing him in the miserable plight in which he appeared, passes him on the street. Gisippus, thinking he had seen and despised him, retires to a solitary part of the city, and next day in despair accuses himself of a murder which he had there seen committed. Titus, who happens to be in court at the time, now recognises his friend, and, in order to save him from punishment, declares that he himself was guilty of the crime. Both, however, are set at liberty, on the confession of the real murderer, who, being present at this singular contest, is touched with pity and remorse. The story coming to the knowledge of Octavius Cæsar, who was then one of the Triumvirs, the delinquent, for the sake of the friends, is pardoned also. Titus bestows his sister in marriage on Gisippus, re-establishes his fortune, and prevails on him to settle in Rome.

This tale is taken from the 2d story of Petrus Alphonsus; but Boccaccio has made considerable alterations, if we may judge of the original from the form in which it is exhibited by Le Grand (vol. iii. p. 262). There it is not two young men brought up together, who form this romantic at-

tachment, but two mercantile correspondents, the one residing in Syria, and the other in Egypt; and the renunciation of his mistress by the latter takes place soon after his first interview with his partner. The change which has been made in this particular by the Italian novelist, is a manifest improvement. In the next place, in the tale of Alphonsus, it is not thought necessary to deceive the bride after the nuptials, in the manner related in the Decameron; she is transferred, without farther ceremony, as a piece of property, from one friend to the other, which is a convincing proof of the eastern origin of the tale. Lastly, in Alphonsus, the friend who is reduced in his circumstances does not fancy himself neglected by his former companion; he sees the murder committed before he enters Rome, and avails himself of the incident to get free from a life in which he had no longer any enjoyment.

As thus improved by Boccaccio, the story ranks high among the serious Italian novels. The internal conflict of Titus—the subsequent contest between the friends—the harangue of Titus to the two assembled families, and the beautiful eulogy on friendship, which terminates the tale, form, in the opinion of critics, the most eloquent passages in the Decameron, or perhaps in the Italian language.

The story of Titus and Gisippus was translated into Latin by the novelist Bandello, and into English by Edward Lewicke, 1562, whose version perhaps directed to this tale the notice of Goldsmith, who has inserted it in his miscellanies, though it is there said to be taken from a Byzantine historian, and the friends are called Septimius and Alcander. Boccaccio's story has also evidently suggested the concluding incidents of Greene's Philomela, and is the subject of an old French drama, by Hardy, entitled Gesippe, ou Les Deux Amis.

10. Gualtier, marquis of Salluzzo, being solicited by his friends to marry, chuses Griselda, the daughter of a peasant, who was one of his vassals. Wishing to make trial of the temper of his wife, he habitually addresses her, soon after the marriage, in the harshest language. He then successively deprives her of a son and daughter, to whom she had given birth, and persuades her that he had murdered them, because his vassals would not submit to be governed by the descendants of a peasant. Next he produces a fictitious bill of divorce, by virtue of which he sends back his wife to the cottage of her father, and lastly, he recalls her to his palace, on pretence that she may put it in order, and officiate at the celebration of his marriage with a second consort. The lady, whom

Griselda at first mistakes for the bride, proves to be her own daughter. Her son is also restored to her, and she is rewarded for her long suffering, which she had borne with proverbial patience, by the redoubled and no longer disguised affection of her husband.

The original of this celebrated tale was at one time believed to have been an old MS., entitled Le Parement des Dames. This was first asserted by Duchat in his notes on Rabelais. It was afterwards mentioned by Le Grand and Manni, and through them by the Abbé de Sade and Galland, (Discours sur quelques anciens poetes ;) but Mr Tyrwhitt informs us that Olivier de la Marche, the author of the Parement des Dames, was not born for many years after the composition of the Decameron, so that some other original must be sought. Noguier, in his Histoire de Thoulouse, asserts, that the patient heroine of the tale actually existed in 1103. In the Annales d' Aquitaine, she is said to have flourished in 1025. That there was such a person is also positively asserted by Foresti da Bergamo, in his Chronicle, though he does not fix the period at which she lived. The probability, therefore, is, that the novel of Boccaccio, as well as the Parement des Dames, has been founded on some real or traditional incident ; a conjec-

ture which is confirmed by the letter of Petrarch to Boccaccio, written after a perusal of the Decameron, in which he says that he had heard the story of Griseldis related many years before.

From whatever source derived, Griselda appears to have been the most popular of all the stories of the Decameron. In the 14th century, the prose translations of it in French were very numerous; Le Grand mentions that he had seen upwards of twenty, under the different names, Miroir des Dames, Exemples de bonnes et mauvaises femmes, &c. Petrarch, who had not seen the Decameron till a short time before his death, (which shows that Boccaccio was ashamed of the work,) read it with much admiration, as appears from his letters, and translated it into Latin in 1373. Chaucer, who borrowed the story from Petrarch, assigns it to the Clerk of Oxenforde, in his Canterbury Tales. The clerk declares in his prologue, that he learned it from Petrarch at Padua; and if we may believe Warton, Chaucer, when in Italy, actually heard the story related by Petrarch, who, before translating it into Latin, had got it by heart, in order to repeat to his friends. The tale became so popular in France, that the comedians of Paris represented, in 1393, a Mystery in French verse, entitled, Le Mystere de Griseldis.

There is also an English drama, called Patient Grissel, entered in Stationers'-hall, 1599. One of Goldoni's plays, in which the tyrannical husband is king of Thessaly, is also formed on the subject of Griseldis. In a novel by Luigi Alamanni, a count of Barcelona subjects his wife to a similar trial of patience with that which Griselda experienced. He proceeds, however, so far as to force her to commit dishonourable actions at his command. The experiment, too, is not intended as a test of his wife's obedience, but as a revenge on account of her once having refused him as a husband.

The story of Boccaccio seems hardly deserving of so much popularity and imitation. "An English reader," says Mr Ellis in his notes to Way's Fabliaux, "is naturally led to compare it with our national ballad, the Nut-Brown Maid (the Henry and Emma of Prior,) because both compositions were intended to describe a perfect female character, exposed to the severest trials, submitting without a murmur to unmerited cruelty, disarming a tormentor by gentleness and patience; and, finally, recompensed for her virtues by transports rendered more exquisite by her suffering." The author then proceeds to show, that although the intention be the same, the conduct of the ballad is

superior to that of the novel. " In the former, the cruel scrutiny of the feelings is suggested by the jealousy of a lover, anxious to explore the whole extent of his empire over the heart of a mistress; his doubts are perhaps natural, and he is only culpable, because he consents to purchase the assurance of his own happiness at the expence of the temporary anguish and apparent degradation of the object of his affections. But she is prepared for the exertion of her firmness by slow degrees; she is strengthened by passion, by the consciousness of the desperate step she had already taken, and by the conviction that every sacrifice was tolerable which insured her claim to the gratitude of her lover, and was paid as the price of his happiness; her trial is short, and her recompence is permanent. For his doubts and jealousy she perhaps found an excuse in her own heart; and in the moment of her final exultation, and triumph in the consciousness of her own excellence, and the prospect of unclouded security, she might easily forgive her lover for having evinced that the idol of his heart was fully deserving of his adoration. Gautier, on the contrary, is neither blinded by love, nor tormented by jealousy: he merely wishes to gratify a childish curiosity, by discovering how far conjugal obedience can be carried; and the re-

compence of unexampled patience is a mere permission to wear a coronet without farther molestation. Nor, as in the ballad, is security obtained by a momentary uneasiness, but by long years of suffering. It may be doubted, whether the emotions to which the story of Boccaccio gives rise, are at all different from those which would be excited by an execution on the rack. The merit, too, of resignation, depends much on its motive; and the cause of morality is not greatly promoted by bestowing, on a passive submission to capricious tyranny, the commendation which is only due to an humble acquiescence in the just dispensations of Providence."

The budget of stories being exhausted with the tale of Griselda, the party of pleasure return to Florence and the pestilence.

There are few works which have had an equal influence on literature with the Decameron of Boccaccio. Even in England its effects were powerful. From it Chaucer adopted the notion of the frame in which he has enclosed his tales, and the general manner of his stories, while in some instances, as we have seen, he has merely versified the novels of the Italian. In 1566, William Paynter printed many of Boccaccio's stories in English, in his work called the Palace of Plea-

sure. This first translation contained sixty novels, and it was soon followed by another volume, comprehending thirty-four additional tales. These are the pages of which Shakspeare made so much use. From Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, we learn that one of the great amusements of our ancestors was reading Boccaccio aloud, an entertainment of which the effects were speedily visible in the literature of the country. The first English translation, however, of the whole Decameron, did not appear till 1620. In France, Boccaccio found early and illustrious imitators. In his own country he brought his native language to perfection, and gave stability to a mode of composition, which before his time had only existed in a rude state in Italy; he collected the current tales of the age, which he decorated with new circumstances, and delivered in a style which has no parallel for elegance, naiveté, and grace. Hence his popularity was unbounded, and his imitators more numerous than those of any author recorded in the annals of literature.

CHAPTER VIII.

Italian Imitators of Boccaccio.—Sacchetti.—Ser Giovanni.—Massuccio.—Sabadino.—Giraldi Cinthio.—Straparola.—Bandello.—Malespini, &c.—French Imitators.

Of the Italian imitators of Boccaccio, the earliest was

FRANCO SACCHETTI,

a Florentine, who was born in 1335, and died about the year 1410. He was a poet in his youth, and travelled to Sclavonia and other countries, to attend to some mercantile concerns. As he advanced in years he was raised to a distinguished rank in the magistracy of Florence; he became *podestà* of Faenza and other places, and at length governor of a Florentine province in the Romagna. Notwithstanding his honours he lived and died poor, but is said to have been a good-humoured faceti-

ous man; he left an immense collection of sonnets and canzone, some of which have been lost, and others are still in MS. Of his tales there were a great variety of MS. copies, which is a proof of the popularity of the author, but all of them had originally been very incomplete, or became so before any one thought of printing the works of this novelist. At length, in 1724, about 250 of the 300 stories, originally written by Sacchetti, were edited by Giovanni Bottari, from two MSS. in the Laurentian library, which were the most ancient, and at the same time the most perfect, at that time extant. This edition was printed at Naples, though with the date of Florence, in two vols. 8vo., and was followed by two impressions, which are *fac similes* of the former, and can hardly be distinguished from it.

Crescimbeni places Sacchetti next to Boccaccio in merit as well as in time. Warton affirms that his tales were composed earlier than the Decameron; but this must be a mistake, as, from the historical incidents mentioned, they could not have been written before 1376. Indeed, the novelist himself, in his proœmium, says he was induced to undertake the work from the example of Boccaccio. "Riguardando all' excellente poeta Giovanni Boccaccio, il quale descrivendo il libro Cen-

to Novelle, &c., Io Franco Sacchetti mi propose di scrivere la presente opera." Were other evidence necessary than the declaration of Sacchetti himself, it is mentioned that he wrote at a much later period than Boccaccio, and in imitation of that author, by many of the Italian commentators, and critics, especially Borghini, in his Origine di Firenze,[1] Cinelli in his catalogue of Florentine writers,[2] and the deputies employed for the correction of the Decameron. All these authors also declare, that most of the incidents related by Sacchetti actually occurred. The novelist, in his introduction, informs us that he had made a collection of all ancient and modern tales; to some incidents related by him he had been witness, and a few had happened to himself. The work, he says, was compiled and written for the entertainment of his countrymen, on account of the wretched state of their capital, which was afflicted by the plague, and torn by civil dissensions.

At the present day I fear the tales of Sacchetti will hardly amuse, in more favourable circumstances. His work wants that dramatic form, which is a principal charm in the Decameron, and which

[1] F. Sacchetti scrisse intorno all' anno 1400.

[2] Qual opera scrisse Sacchetti mosso dal esempio del Boccaccio, con stile di lui piu puro e familiare.

ean alone bestow unity or connection on this species of composition. The merit of a pure and easy style is indeed allowed him by all the critics of his own country, and his tales are also regarded by the Italian antiquaries, who frequently avail themselves of his works, as most valuable records of some curious historical facts, and of customs that had fallen into disuse; but their intrinsic merit, merely considered as stories, is not great. There are few novels of ingenious gallantry, and none of any length, interest, or pathos, like the Griselda, or the Cymon and Iphigenia of the Decameron. A great number of them are accounts of foolish tricks performed by Buffalmacco, the painter, and played on Messer Dolcibene, and Alberto da Siena, who seem to have been the butts of that age, as Calandrino was in the time of Boccaccio. But by far the greatest proportion of the work consists of sayings or repartees, which resemble, except in merit, the Facetiae of Poggio. Sismondi, in the Histoire de la Literature du midi de l'Europe, has pronounced a very accurate judgment on the tales of Sacchetti.—" Au reste, quelque eloge que l'on fasse de la pureté et de l' elegance de son style, Je le trouve plus curieux a consulter sur les moeurs de son temps qu' entrainant par sa gaité lorsque il croit être le plus plaisant. Il rapporte dans ses

Nouvelles presque toujours des evenemens de son temps et d' autour de lui : ce sont des anecdotes domestiques—de petits accidens de menage, qui, en general, me paroissent tres-peu rejouissans ; quelquefois des friponneries qui ne sont guere adroites, des plaisanteries qui ne sont gueres fines ; et l' on est souvent tout etonné de voir un plaisant de profession s' avouer vaincu par un mot piquant qui lui a dit un enfant ou un rustre, et qui ne nous cause pas beaucoup d' admiration. Apres avoir lu ces Nouvelles, on ne peut s' empecher de conclure que l' art de la conversation n' avait pas fait dans le quatorzieme siecle des progrès aussi rapides que les autres beaux arts, et que ces grands hommes a qui nous devons tant de chefs d' œuvre n' etaient point si bons a entendre causer que des gens qui ne les valent pas."—Although this opinion seems on the whole well founded, a few examples may be adduced as specimens of the manner of Sacchetti, in the style of composition which he has chiefly adopted.

One day while a blacksmith was singing, or rather bawling out the verses of Dante, that poet happened to pass at the time, and in a sudden emotion of anger, threw down all the workman's utensils. On the blacksmith complaining of this treatment, Dante replied, "I am only doing to

your tools what you do to my verses: I will leave you unmolested, if you cease to spoil my productions." This foolish jest is elsewhere told of Ariosto and other poets.

Some one having come unasked to a feast, and being reproved for his forwardness by the other guests, said it was not his fault that he had not been invited.

A boy of fourteen years of age astonishes a company with the smartness and sagacity of his conversation. One of the number remarks, that the folly of grown-up men is usually in proportion to the sense of their childhood. "You," replies the boy, "must have been a person of extraordinary wisdom in your infancy." This story is the Puer facete dicax in Poggio's Facetiae, and is there told of a cardinal and a child who delivered a harangue in presence of the pope.

A Florentine buffoon, seeing a senator and a person of villainous appearance quarrelling at a gaming-house, and the spectators looking quietly on without interfering, offered himself as umpire. This being accepted, he decided for the rascal, without hearing the state of the game, on the ground that where two persons of an exterior so dissimilar dispute, the lookers-on take the part of the man of respectable appearance, if he has the

least shadow of right. There is a similar story recorded of a decision given by the Chevalier de Grammont against Louis XIV.

Philip of Valois lost a favourite hawk, for which he offered a reward of two hundred francs. This falcon was some time after found by a peasant, who, recognising the royal bird by the *fleurs de lis* engraved on the bells, carried it to the palace, and was admitted to present it to his majesty by the usher of the chamber, on condition that he should give him half of whatever recompence was bestowed. The peasant informed the king of this agreement, and solicited as his reward fifty strokes of the baton. He accordingly receives twenty-five blows, and the usher has the remainder of the gratification; but the clown afterwards privately obtains a pecuniary remuneration from the monarch. This story coincides with an English ballad of the end of the 14th century, published in Weber's Metrical Romances, entitled Sir Cleges, where the knight of that name, who wishes to present an offering to King Uter, is admitted into the palace by the porter, and introduced to the royal presence by the steward, on condition that each should receive a third of the recompence bestowed on him by the monarch. The knight being requested by the king to fix his reward,

chuses twelve bastinados, eight of which he enjoys the satisfaction of distributing with his own hand between the steward and the porter.

These are a few of the tales of Sacchetti, which are said to have had some foundation in fact. There are also a good many stories derived from the east, through the medium of the Gesta Romanorum and the Fabliaux.

138. The master of a family, resolving to rule his house without dispute, places a pair of breeches in the hall, and calls on his wife to come and fight for them, if she wishes any longer to contest the superiority. This novel of Sacchetti is incomplete, and there is no account of the issue of the combat, but it is evidently taken from a fabliau, entitled De Sire Hain et de dame Anieuse (Le Grand, 3, 190), where the combat ends in favour of the husband. This contest has probably given rise to the French phrase, Elle porte les culotes, which has become proverbial, I believe, in every European nation where the pre-eminence is disputed.

140. From the story in the Fabliaux concerning three Blind Beggars of Compiegne (see above, vol. II. p. 198, &c.). In the original, however, they get no money, but in Sacchetti one of their number receives a small coin, and is told it is

one more valuable,—an alteration which is certainly no improvement. The tale, as related by Sacchetti, is the second novel of Sozzini.

152. Story of a man who gives a present of an ass, that had been taught some curious tricks, to a great lord, and receives in return a horse finely caparisoned. Another person hearing of this sends two asses, but is disappointed of his requital. This story was originally in the Fabliaux, and has been imitated in various forms in almost every language.

166. Is the first of a series of tales concerning cures performed in an extraordinary or comical manner. It is also from one of the Fabliaux, entitled L' Arracheur de Dents, (Le Grand, 2, 293), where a tooth-drawer fastens one end of an iron wire to the tusk that is to be pulled out, and the other to an anvil; he then passes a red-hot iron before the nose of his patient, who, from the surprise, throws himself suddenly back, and by this jerk the tooth is extracted.

198. A blind beggar hides a hundred florins under a stone in a chapel, but, being observed by some one, his money is stolen. Having discovered his loss, he desires his son to place him next morning at the entrance of the church, and observe if any one going in should eye him in a peculiar manner. He is in consequence informed that a cer-

tain person, who was in fact the thief, had been very particular in his regards. To him the beggar straightway repairs, and tells him that he has a hundred florins concealed in the church, and a hundred more lent out, which are to be restored in eight days, and concludes with requesting, that he would lay out the whole for him to the best advantage. The thief, in hopes of being enabled to purloin all, replaces what he had stolen. There is a similar story in the Arabian Nights—14th Tale of Alphonsus—Le Grand, 3, 282.—Gesta Romanorum, c. 118.—Cento Novelle Antiche, N. 74.

206. A miller's wife substitutes herself for a woman with whom she discovered her husband had an assignation, and her spouse had previously agreed to share with a friend the favours he was to receive. This tale is taken, with little variation, from Le Meunier d' Aleus (Le Grand, 3, 292). The leading circumstances, however, have been told oftner than once in the Fabliaux, and have escaped the notice of few of the French or Italian novelists. They form the Quinque ova in the Facetiae of Poggio; the 9th of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles; the 8th of the Queen of Navarre, and the Quiproquo of Fontaine.

207. This story is from a fabliau, entitled La Culette des Cordeliers (Le Grand, 1, 299). It is

there told, that a merchant's wife in Orleans had a clerk for a gallant. The husband came home one night unexpectedly. The clerk had time to escape, but left an essential article of dress behind him, which on the following morning the husband put on by mistake. Before evening he remarked the change in his clothes, and on his return home reproached his wife with her infidelity. Aware, however, of her perilous situation, she had applied, during her husband's absence, for a similar article of dress, at the monastery of St Francis. She persuaded her spouse that she had procured what he then wore, for the purpose of transmitting his name to posterity; and, on inquiry, the husband of course found her declaration confirmed by the monks of St Francis. In Sacchetti the lover is a friar, and at his request a monk goes to demand what the friar had left from the husband, as relics of St Francis, which his wife had procured from the monastery. The story is in Sabadino, (p. 38), the Facetiae of Poggio, where it is the Braccae Divi Francisci, and the Novellino of Massuccio, (3d of 1st part;) but in the last work the monks come to take back what they had lent, in solemn procession: Massuccio's tale has been versified in the Novelle Galanti of Casti, under title of Brache di San Griffone. Similar incidents are related in

the Apology for Herodotus, by Henry Stephens, and in the Jewish Spy, where we are informed by the author in a note, that this adventure actually happened to a Jesuit in France. Of all these tales the origin may, perhaps, be a story in Apuleius, where a gallant is detected by the husband from having left his sandals. The lover afterwards accounts for their having been found in the house, by accusing the husband's slave, (with whom he was in collusion), in presence of his master, of having stolen them from him at the public bath. The story of Apuleius is versified in the Orlando Innamorato (C. 55), but there a mantle is left by the gallant instead of sandals.

In chronological order, the novelist who comes next to Sacchetti, is

SER GIOVANNI,[1]

a Florentine notary. His tales, as he mentions in a sonnet prefixed, were begun in 1378, and they were written at a village in the neighbourhood of Forli. They were not published, however, till 1558, at Milan. Those copies which bear the date

[1] Il Pecorone di Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, nel quale si contengono cinquanta Novelle Antiche, belle d'invenzione e di stile.

of 1554, are in fact a subsequent edition with a false date, and no other impression, which was genuine and perfect, appeared till 1757. This work is entitled Il Pecorone (the Dunce), a title which the author assumed, as some Italian academicians styled themselves, Insensati, Stolidi, &c. appellations in which there was not always so much irony as they imagined.

In point of purity and elegance of style, Ser Giovanni is reckoned inferior only to Boccaccio; a number of his tales are also curious in a historical point of view, and correspond precisely with facts related by Giovanni Villani. Indeed, some have erroneously believed that this historian was the Giovanni who wrote the Pecorone.

Near the commencement of his work the novelist feigns that a young man of Florence, named Auretto, fell in love by report with a nun of a convent at Forli. With the design of having frequent opportunities of seeing her, Auretto repaired to Forli, and became a monk of the same order. He was soon appointed chaplain of the convent, and in that capacity had liberty of paying daily visits to his mistress. At length it is agreed, that at these interviews each should relate a tale. The work is accordingly divided into days, the number of which is twenty-five; each day contains

two stories, and generally concludes with songs or amorous verses.

The first story of Ser Giovanni is one of the most beautiful triumphs of honour which has ever been recorded. Galgano, a young gentleman of Siena, becomes deeply enamoured of a lady named Donna Minoccia. After paying court to her a considerable time in vain, the lady is induced, by the wonderful eulogies accidentally given of him by Messer Stricca, her husband, to invite him to an interview during a journey of the latter to Perugia.—" Cosi sentendo Galgano che Messer Stricca era ito a Perugia, si mosse la sera a ora competente, e andò a casa colei ch' egli amava assai piu che gli occhi suoi. E giunto nel cospetto della donna, con molta riverenza la salutò, dove la donna con molta feste lo prese per mano, e poi l' abbraccio, dicendo: ben venga il mio Galgano per cento volte; e senza piu dire si donarono la pace piu e piu volte. E poi la donna fe venire confetti e vini, e bevuto e confettato ch' ebbero insieme, la donna lo prese per mano e disse: Galgano mio, egli è tempo d' andare a dormire, e pero audianci a letto. Rispose Galgano e disse: Madonna, a ogni piacer vostro. Entrati che furono a camera, dopo molti belli e piacevoli ragionamenti, la donna si spogliò et en-

trò nel letto, e poi disse a Galgano: E mi pare che tu sia si vorgognoso e si temente; che hai tu? non ti piaccio Io? no sei tu contento? non hai tu cio che tu vuoi? Rispose Galgano: Madonna si, e non mi potrebbe Iddio aver fatto maggior grazia, che ritrovarmi nelle braccia vostre: E cosi ragionando sopra questa materia, si spogliò, e entrò nell letto allato a colei, cui egli aveva tanto tempo desiderata. E poi che fu entrato le disse: Madonna, io voglio una grazia da voi, se vi piace. Disse la donna, Galgano mio, domanda; ma prima voglio che tu m' abbracci, e cosi fe. Disse Galgano, Madonna, io mi maraviglio forte, come voi avete stasera mandato per me piu che altre volte, avendovi io tanto tempo desiderata e seguita, e voi mai non voleste me vedere nè udire. Che v' ha mosso hora? Rispose la Donna: Io te lo diro. Egli e vero che pochi giorni sono, che tu passasti con un tuo sparviere quinci oltre; di che il mio marito mostro che ti vedesse e che t' invitasse a cena, e tu non volesti venire. All ora il tuo sparviere volò dietro a una Gazza; e io veggendolo cosi bene schermire con lei, domandai il mio marito, di cui egli era; onde egli mi rispose ch' egli era del piu virtuoso giovane di Siena e ch' egli aveva bene a cui somigliare; pero ch' e' non vide mai nessuno compiuto quanto eri

tu in ogni cosa. E sopra questo mi ti lodò molto, onde io udendoti lodare a quel modo, e sapiendo il bene che tu mi avevi voluto, posemi in cuore di mandare per te, e di non t' esser piu cruda; e questa è la cagione. Rispose Galgano: è questo vero? Disse la donna: certo si. Hacci nessuna altra cagione? Rispose la Donna—No. Veramente, disse Galgano, non piaccia a Dio, nè voglia, poi che 'l vostro marito m' ha fatto e detto di me tanta cortesia, ch' io usi a lui villania. E subito si gittò fuori del letto, e rivestissi e prese commiato dalla donna, e andossi con Dio; ne mai piu guardò quella donna per quello affare, e a messer Stricca portò sempre singolarissimo amore e riverenza."

1. 2. A student of Bologna requests his master to instruct him in the science of love. The learned doctor directs him to repair to the church of the Frati Minori, to observe the ladies who assemble there, and report to him by whose beauty he is chiefly captivated. It happens that the scholar is smitten with the charms of his master's wife, of whose attractions he gives him a rapturous description; but neither the teacher nor pupil are aware of the person on whom the doctor's lessons are practised. The student from time to time reports to

his preceptor the successful progress of his suit, which he carries on entirely according to his instructions. At length, however, the doctor's suspicions being awakened, he enters his own house at the time his pupil had mentioned as the hour of rendezvous with his mistress. When the lady heard him at the door she concealed her lover under a heap of half-dried linen. The husband having made search through the house, believes at length that his suspicions were groundless. Next day, however, the young man, who was still unconscious of the strong interest which his master took in the occurrence, related to him the alarm he had received from the husband of his mistress, and the whole story of his concealment.

This tale, which also occurs in the Nights of Straparola (4. of the 4.), is probably of eastern origin, as it resembles the story of the Second Traveller in the Bahar-Danush, a work compiled from the most ancient Brahmin traditions. But whatever may be its origin, the story of Ser Giovanni is curious, as being the foundation of those scenes of Shakspeare's Merry Wives of Windsor where Falstaff reports to Mr Ford, under the name of Brooke, the progress of his suit with Mrs Ford, and the various contrivances by which he escaped from the search of the jealous husband,

one of which was being carried out of the house concealed in a heap of foul linen. Shakspeare derived these incidents through the medium of the collection entitled The Fortunate, Deceived, and Unfortunate Lovers, of which the first tale is a translation of Ser Giovanni; he may also have looked at the story of the Two Lovers of Pisa, related in Tarleton's Newes out of Purgatorie, where the incidents are related according to Straparola's version of the story. Our great dramatist, however, has given a different turn to the incidents, by the ludicrous character of Falstaff, and by the assignations of the lady being merely devices to expose him to ridicule. Moliere, too, has formed on this tale his comedy L' Ecole des Femmes, where the principal amusement arises from a gallant confiding the progress of his intrigue with a young lady to her guardian, who is on the eve of espousing his ward. It has also furnished the subject of another French play, called Le Maitre en Droit, and has been imitated by Fontaine under the same title. Finally, it has suggested that part of Gil Blas where Don Raphael confides to Balthazar the progress of an amour with his wife, and particularly details the interruptions he met with from the unexpected arrival of the husband.

2. 1. A son, while on death-bed, writes to his mother to send him a shirt made by the most happy woman in the city where she resided. The mother finds that the person whom she selects is utterly wretched, and is thus consoled for her own loss, as her son intended. This tale has given rise to the Fruitless Enquiry, or Search after Happiness, of Mrs Heywood, one of the earliest of our English novelists. There a young man having disappeared, his mother in despair consulted a fortune-teller, who said that to procure his return she must get a shirt made for him by a woman completely contented. The consequent search introduces the relation of a number of stories, tending to show that no one is perfectly happy. These moral fictions are probably of eastern origin. Abulfaragius, the great Arabic historian, who lived in the 13th century, informs us that Iskender while dying, in order to console his mother, desired her to prepare a banquet for all those who till that moment had passed through life without experiencing affliction.

2. 2. Relates a revenge taken by a cavalier, in return for an alarm which his mistress had given him during an assignation. It is derived from the French Fabliau Les Deux Changeurs (Barbazan, vol. iii. p. 254), and has been imitated in

Bandello Straparola, and the 1st tale of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, entitled La Médaille au Revers.

3. 1. Describes manners which to us appear very singular and scandalous, but do not seem to have been considered in that light in the 14th century. The freedom with which Boccaccio has treated the church of Rome has excited much astonishment; but his tales are not more severe on the clergy than this and another story of Ser Giovanni, who seems in his religious politics to have been inimical to the establishment of the church at Avignon.

3. 2. Is the 7th of the 7th of the Decameron.

4. 1. Is a very singular but well-known story. A young man, named Giannotto, is adopted by Ansaldo, a rich Venetian merchant. He obtains permission to go to Alexandria, and sets sail in a ship richly laden. On his voyage he enters the port of Belmont, where a lady of great wealth resided, and who announced herself as the prize of any person who could enjoy her. Giannotto is entertained in her palace, and, having partaken of wine purposely mixed with soporific ingredients, he falls asleep on going to bed, and his vessel is confiscated next morning, according to the stipu-

lated conditions. He returns to Venice, fits out another vessel for Belmont, and acts in a similar manner. The third time Ansaldo is forced to borrow ten thousand ducats from a Jew, on condition of his creditor being allowed to take a pound of flesh from his body if he does not pay by a certain time. Giannotto's expedition is now more fortunate, and he obtains the lady in marriage by refraining from the wine, according to a hint he received from a waiting-maid. Occupied with his bride, he forgets the bond of Ansaldo till the day it is due; he then hastens to Venice, but as the period had elapsed, the Jew refuses to accept ten times the money. At this crisis the new-married lady arrives, disguised as a lawyer, and announces, as was the custom in Italy, that she had come to decide difficult cases; for in that age delicate points were not determined by the ordinary judges of the provinces, but by doctors of law, who were called from Bologna, and other places at a distance. The pretended lawyer being consulted on the claim of the Jew, decides that he is entitled to insist on the pound of flesh, but that he should be beheaded if he draw one drop of blood from his debtor. The judge then takes from Giannotto his marriage-ring as a fee, and

afterwards banters him in her own character for having parted with it.

This story of the bond is of eastern origin; it occurs in the Persian Monshee, and innumerable works which were written about the time of the Pecorone. The principal situation has been spun out in the adventures of Almoradin, related in the French story of Abdallah, the son of Hanif, and every one will recognise in this tale a part of the plot of Shakspeare's Merchant of Venice. It was transferred, however, into many publications intermediate between the Pecorone and the Merchant of Venice, by which it may have been suggested to the English dramatist. There was, in the first place, an old English play on this subject, entitled the Jew. It was also related in the English Gesta Romanorum, and the ballad of Gernutus, or the Jew of Venice. The incidents, however, in Shakspeare bear a much closer resemblance to the tale of Ser Giovanni, than either to the ballad or to the Gesta Romanorum. In the ballad there is nothing said of the residence at Belmont, nor the incident of the ring, as it is a judge, and not the lady, who gives the decision. In the Gesta the lady is daughter of the emperor of Rome, and the pound of flesh is demanded from the borrower, without the introduc-

tion of a person bound for the principal debtor. There are some phrases, however, in the Gesta, which would lead us to think that Shakspeare had at least consulted that work. "Conventionem meam," says the Jew, "volo habere." The probability is, that he compiled from some lost translation of the tale in the Pecorone, the Gesta Romanorum, and the ballad of Gernutus, and interwove all with the story of the caskets, in such a manner, as to render his plot more absurd than the incidents of any one of his originals. A story somewhat similar is told by Gregorio Leti, in his Life of Sixtus V.; but there a Jew offers a pound of his flesh as security to a merchant, whose property in Hispaniola he had insured. It also occurs in a work of the Spanish jesuit, Gracian.

4. 2. Story of an old French count, who obtains a young bride by employing one of the king's squires, who overthrows all the count's rivals in a tournament, and afterwards allows himself to be vanquished by the infirm and aged suitor. After the death of the old count the young squire obtains the widow, who is represented as holding a very curious conversation with her father, copied from the 15th tale of Sacchetti. See also the Excusatio Sterilitatis in Poggio's Facetiae.

5. 2. Is from the 9th of the 9th day of the Decameron.

6. 1. In the 13th century there were two celebrated theologians in the university of Paris, who had frequent disputations. The one was called Messer Alano, and the other Pierre: the former was a zealous catholic, but the latter was suspected of heretical opinions. Alano having made a journey to Rome, and being shocked with the wickedness that there prevailed, offered himself as a servant to a rigid order of monks on the Appenine mountains. Here he remained a considerable time, employed in menial offices, and regarded as almost an idiot by the brethren. Meanwhile, through his absence, the tenets of Peter gained ground in the university of Paris, and at length this heretic proceeded to Rome, to maintain heterodox propositions in the consistory. A council was convoked, which all the bishops and abbots in Italy were invited to attend. At his earnest request, Alano was carried to Rome to see the pope, by the abbot of the monastery to which he had retired, and being a man of diminutive stature, was brought into the council concealed under the robes of his superior. Peter, by his imposing appearance and thundering eloquence, daunted his opponents, and deterred them from

reply; but after a pause, Alano started out between the legs of the abbot, and confuted, in an elegant Latin oration, the heretical doctrines of his former adversary. This Messer Alano, I suppose, was Alain de L'Isle, a celebrated theologian of the university of Paris, who lived in the 13th century, and was distinguished by the appellation of Doctor Universalis. Among his works, a catalogue of which is given by Fabricius, there exists—Commentaria sive septem libri explanationum in Divinationes Propheticas Merlini Caledonii, a Galfredo Monemutensi Latino carmine redditas e Britannico: Francfurti, 1608, 8vo.

1. & 2. of 7. Contain the blackest and most dreadful examples of Italian jealousy. In the first a husband invites the relations of his wife and of his wife's lover to an entertainment, and has them all beaten to death by his domestics. The lady is afterwards tied to the dead body of her lover, and is thus left by her husband till she expires. "Fu questa crudelta," says the author, "da certi lodata, e da certi biasimata; ma nessuno ardiva aprir la bocca, considerato ch'era grand'uomo in Roma."

8. 1. Origin of the factions of Guelphs and Ghibellines: two German lords of the name of Guelfe and Gibelin, having quarrelled about a hound in

the 13th century, commenced a bloody war. Each was joined by his adherents: the former obtained the protection of the pope, the latter that of the emperor. Their quarrel passed into Italy from one of the Guelph faction having broken a promise of marriage to a lady, whose family in consequence leagued itself with the Ghibellines; the dissension thence spread all over Italy. The Guelphs ruled some time in Florence, but were expelled from it by their foes in 1260.

8. 2. A deceit practised on the public of Florence by the Ghibellines, during their banishment, which leads to their return, and the expulsion of the Guelphs.

9. 1. The doge of Venice employed an architect, called Bindo, to erect a building which should contain all the treasure of the republic, and should be inaccessible to depredators. This ingenious artist reserved a moveable stone in a part of the wall, in order that he might himself enter when he found convenient. He and his son having soon after fallen into great poverty, they one night obtained access by this secret opening, and abstracted a golden vase. The loss was some time after remarked by the doge, while exhibiting the treasury to a stranger. In order to discover the fraud, he closed the doors, ordered some straw to

be burned in the interior of the building, and found out the concealed entrance by the egress of the smoke. Conjecturing that the robber must pass this way, and that he would probably return, he placed at the bottom of this part of the wall a caldron filled with pitch, which was constantly kept boiling. Bindo and his son were soon forced by poverty to have recourse to their former means of supply. The father fell up to the neck in the caldron, and, finding that death was inevitable, he called to his son to cut off his head, and throw it where it could not be found, in order to prevent farther discovery. Having executed this command, the young man returned home, and informed his neighbours that his father had gone on a long journey, but he was obliged to communicate the truth to his mother, whose affliction now became the chief cause of embarassment: For the doge perceiving that the robber must have had associates, ordered the skeleton to be hung upon a gibbet, in the expectation that it would be claimed. This spectacle being observed from her house, by his widow, her cries brought up the guard, and her son was obliged, on hearing them approach, to wound himself on the hand, to afford a reasonable pretext for her exclamations. She next insisted that her son

should carry off the skeleton from the gibbet. He accordingly purchased twelve habits of black monks, in which he equipped twelve porters whom he had hired for the purpose. Having then disguised himself with a vizard, and mounted a horse covered with black cloth, he bore off the body spite of the guards and spies by whom it was surrounded, and who reported to the doge that it had been conveyed away by demons. The story then relates other means to which the doge resorted, all of which are defeated by the ingenuity of the robber. At length the curiosity of the doge is so much excited, that he offers the hand of his daughter to any one who will discover the transaction. On this the young man reveals the whole, and receives the promised bride in return.

This story is as old as Herodotus, who tells it of a king of Egypt and his architect. There is some slight variation in the incidents of the Pecorone; but Bandello (Par. 1, N. 25) has adhered closely to the Greek original. In both an architect employed by a king of Egypt leaves a stone in the walls of the treasury, which can be removed at pleasure. At his death he bequeaths the knowledge of this secret as a legacy to his two sons; after this the stories correspond with the Pecorone, except that one of the brothers is caught in a net, in place of

falling into a caldron, and the body when hung up is removed by the surviving brother intoxicating the guards. What is related by other Greek writers concerning the brothers Agamedes and Trophonius, who were architects employed by Grecian kings to build palaces, corresponds with the story of Herodotus. The father murdered by his son in the Seven Wise Masters is a similar story, as also that of Berinus, in a very old French romance, entitled L' Histoire du Chevalier Berinus. In this last work it is the treasury of Philip, a Roman emperor, that is broken into. In order to discover the robber, that monarch exposes his daughter to public prostitution, in expectation that she may extract the secret in the hour of dalliance. Berinus reveals the theft, and the lady, that she may distinguish him in the morning, makes an indelible black mark on his face. Berinus does the same to the other knights, but his mark alone is found to be the size of the princess's thumb. This romance, of which the MS. is extremely old, is the original of the Merchant's Second Tale, or Story of Beryn, sometimes published with Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The first half of the story, however, concerning the treasury, has not been adopted by the English poet, or, at least, is not in that part of his tale which is preserved.

9. 2. The son of the emperor of Germany runs off with the daughter of the king of Arragon, which occasions a long war between these two powers.

10. 1. Story of the Princess Denise of France, who, to avoid a disagreeable marriage with an old German prince, escapes in disguise to England, and is there received in a convent. The king passing that way, falls in love with and espouses her. Afterwards, while he was engaged in a war in Scotland, his wife brings forth twins; but the queen-mother sends to acquaint her son that his spouse had given birth to two monsters. In place of his majesty's answer, ordering them to be nevertheless brought up with the utmost care, she substitutes a mandate for their destruction, and also for that of the queen. The person to whom the execution of this command is entrusted, allows the queen to depart with her twins to Genoa. At the end of some years she discovers her husband at Rome, on his way to a crusade; she there presents him with his children, and is brought back with them in triumph to England.

The principal part of Chaucer's Man of Lawes Tale is taken from this story. There Custance, the daughter of the emperor of Rome, is married to an eastern soldan. After the death of this mo-

narch, Custance flies to England, where she is received into the house of a constable of Northumberland. She is accused by a rejected lover of the murder of the constable's wife, but is saved by a miraculous interposition of Providence, and married to the king of England. After this the stories correspond precisely. Tyrwhitt, who does not seem to have been aware of the existence of the novel in the Pecorone, says, "that Chaucer had his Man of Lawes Tale from Gower's Confessio Amantis." To Gower he thinks it came from an old English rhyme, entitled Emaré, which professes to be taken from a Breton lay. But Mr Ritson, by whom Emaré has been published, thinks that its primary source is the legendary life of Offa, king of the West Angles, attributed to Matthew Paris. In Emaré, the heroine who bears that name is exposed on the sea in a boat, on account of her refusing to comply with the incestuous proposals of her father. She is driven on the coast of Wales, and married to the king of that country. The story then corresponds with the Pecorone, except, that in the conclusion, the son of Emaré serves the king as a cupbearer. While acting in this capacity, the monarch discovers him to be his child, and in consequence finds out his queen whom he had lost. This is also the story

of the knight's plot in the English Gesta Romanorum. It is the subject, too, of a very old French romance, published in 4to, without date, entitled Le Roman de la Belle Helene de Constantinople. There, as in Emaré, the heroine escapes to England to avoid a marriage with her father the king of Constantinople. The story then proceeds as in the other versions. At length she is ordered to be burnt, but is saved by the duke of Gloster's niece kindly offering to personate her on that occasion. The romance is spun out by long details of the exploits of her husband against the Saracens, and she is finally discovered by him in France, on his way to the Holy Land. In these fictions the incidents are not very probable; but stories of wonderful adventure, miraculous interpositions, and discoveries, were less disgusting in old times than they have now become, not only because they were more likely to happen, but because the bounds of probability were then less known and ascertained.

The greater part of the remaining tales of the Pecorone are historical, and were furnished to the novelist, as he himself informs us, by his friends and contemporaries Giovanni and Matteo Villani, who have transmitted the most authentic chroni-

cles of these early ages. Those stories that recount the dissensions of Florence, are strikingly illustrative of its situation, of the character of its principal inhabitants, and of the factions by which it was distracted. But the Italian chroniclers, though well acquainted with the transactions of their native cities and provinces, in their own times, possessed but inaccurate information concerning foreign countries. Accordingly, those tales which relate to the affairs of other nations, are merely curious as exhibiting in some degree the nature of the historical opinions, propagated and believed in the 14th century.

Thus, in the 2d of the 19th day, it is related, that William of Normandy got possession of the throne of England, having vanquished Taul, the king of the island, in a great battle. After him reigned his son William, and his second son Henry, who slew the blessed Thomas of Canterbury, because he reproved him for his vices, and retaining the tythes of the church; on account of which murder God wrought a great judgment on him, for as he was riding in Paris with King Lewis, a sow ran in between the feet of his horse, so that he was tumbled down, and the king died in consequence of the fall.[1] Henry left his crown to his

[1] The Roman Catholics of the 14th century seem to have

son Stephen. That monarch bequeathed it to a second Henry, who was followed by his son John. This prince was distinguished for his courtesy, (questo re Giovanni fu il piu cortese signor del Mondo,) but dying without children, was succeeded by his brother Richard, &c. &c. I do not know how King John (unless it was by his dastardly submission to the pope,) obtained such high reputation in Italy; but the novels of that country, particularly the Cento Novelle Antiche, are full of instances of his generosity and courtesy.

The last tale contains the history of Charles, count of Anjou, brother of St Louis. This story occupies a fifth part of the whole work, and is by much too long to have been related at a stolen interview between a nun and an enamoured chaplain. In some of the MS. copies of the Pecorone, there is substituted for this historical novel an account of an intrigue carried on by a young man with a nun, and of the extraordinary punishment that remained to him after his death.

held this sow in the same respect that the Jacobites did the *little gentleman in the velvet coat*, who raised the hillock over which the horse of King William stumbled,

In no species of composition is the stagnation or degeneracy of national literature, which took place in Italy from the end of the 14th to the conclusion of the 15th century, more remarkable than in that with which we are now engaged. I know of no imitator of Boccaccio worthy to be mentioned in the course of that period: the twelve novels of Gentile Sermini of Sienna, and those of Fortini, both of whom lived during this interval, are totally uninteresting; yet in them we may trace the origin of our most ordinary jests, or, at least, a coincidence with them; thus, the 10th of Sermini is the story of one stammerer meeting another, and each supposing that his neighbour intends to ridicule him. In the 8th novel of Fortini, a countryman is persuaded at market, by the repeated asseverations of the by-standers, that the kids he had for sale were capons, and he disposes of them as such.

Subsequent to Ser Giovanni, the first novelist deserving of notice is

MASSUCCIO DI SALERNO,[1]

who flourished about 1470. The date of the composition of his tales, at least, cannot be placed earlier, as he mentions in one of his stories the capture of Arzilla, which happened in that year. Of the circumstances of the life of this novelist, the little that may be known can only be gathered from his writings. He was a Neapolitan by birth, and a man of some rank and family : he seldom resided, however, in his own country, the greater part of his life having been spent in the service of the dukes of Milan. In his Prooemium he asserts the truth of his stories more vehemently than usual. " Invoco," says the author, " l'altissimo Dio per testimonio che tutte son verisimile historie ; e le piu negli nostri moderni tempi avenute." It is pretended, in the same part of his work, that he had tried to imitate the language and idiom of Boccaccio ; an attempt, however laudable, in which he has been extremely unsuccessful, as his style is corrupted by the frequent use of the Neapolitan dia-

[1] Il Novellino : nel quale si contengono cinquanta Novelle.

lect, and his sentences are often strangely inverted. The tales of Massuccio, however, are more original than those of most Italian novelists, few being borrowed from Boccaccio, or even from the Fabliaux. Whatever may be the merit of Massuccio, if we may judge from the number of editions, he has been, next to the father of Tuscan prose, the most popular of all the authors of this class. His novels were first published at Naples, folio, 1476; afterwards at Venice, 1484; again in 1492, without date of place; there was a 4to edition in 1522, and three in 8vo, 1525, 1531, 1535, all at Venice. A subsequent Venetian edition, 1541, and one printed at Naples about the same time, have been much mutilated and corrected, on account of the satire and reflections on monks and ecclesiastics, of which the tales of Massuccio are full: indeed, the professed object of the work, as the author declares, is to expose "la guasta vita de finti Religiosi."

The tales of Massuccio are divided into five parts, in each of which, at least in the three first, he seems to have had in view some particular maxim, which he meant to establish or illustrate. In the first part, which contains ten novels, the scope of the stories is to show that God will, sooner or later, inflict vengeance on dissolute monks,

who in these tales are generally brought to shame from being detected at a rendezvous. The first in this division is the story of a monk killed by a jealous husband, on account of an affair of gallantry. In this tale the amusement consists in the schemes devised for getting rid of the dead body. The husband places it in an appendage to a monastery, where it was sure to be early discovered: it is there found by the prior, who carries it to the door of the murderer, and, after some other adventures, it is finally tied to a young and unbroken horse. A lance is placed in the hand, and a shield tied round the neck. Those on the street, recognising the monk, believe him to be mad, and attribute his death to the colt falling with him into a well. The origin of this tale is the fabliau entitled Le Sacristain de Cluni (Le Grand, iv. 252,) or the thirty-first chapter of the English Gesta Romanorum. Strange as it may appear, this was a favourite tale both in France and England, and has been imitated by almost every novelist, and in all the languages of Europe.

The principal object of the second part is to prove that the monks of those days invented many frauds to draw money from the credulous, and that in return they were often cozened by laymen. Thus, two Neapolitan sharpers had stolen a purse

from a Genoese merchant. Having despoiled the unfortunate man, they arrived at Sienna, where the good St Bernardin was preaching with all possible effect and edification. One of the cheats addressed the holy man with a hypocritical air. "My reverend father," said he, "I am poor but honest: I have a very timorous and delicate conscience; here is a purse which some one has lost and I have found. I would give a great deal, if I had aught, to discover the owner, in order to restore it to him, but my honesty is all my property. I pray you to announce in your first discourse that if any one has lost this purse he may reclaim it; you can restore it to him, for I place it in your hands." The priest, as requested, made known the matter in his next sermon. On this the accomplice of the knave presented himself, as had been agreed on with his comrade, and claimed the purse. As he detailed exactly what it contained, his right to it was not doubted, and the priest gave it to him with a strong recommendation to bestow a part on the honest man who had restored it; but the pretended owner declared he could not afford to part with any thing, and left the church, carrying the purse along with him. The saint believing that the conscientious finder remained in want, solicited for him the charity of the congregation; every one was eager to

recompense him, and the subscription was so large, that next day, when the Genoese merchant arrived to claim his purse, the preacher and his congregation could bestow on him nothing but their benediction.

The fourteenth tale, however, is on a different topic from the former ones of the second part; it is the story of a young gentleman of Messina, who becomes enamoured of the daughter of a rich Neapolitan miser. As the father kept his child perpetually shut up, the lover has recourse to stratagem. Pretending to set out on a long journey, he deposits with the miser a number of valuable effects, leaving, among other things, a female slave, who prepossesses the mind of the girl in favour of her master, and finally assists in the elopement of the young lady, and the robbery of her father's jewels, which she carries along with her. It has already been shown that the stories of the bond and of the caskets in the Merchant of Venice were borrowed from Italian novels, nor is it improbable that the avaricious father in this tale, the daughter so carefully shut up, the elopement of the lovers managed by the intervention of a servant, the robbery of the father, and his grief on the discovery, which is represented as divided

between the loss of his daughter and ducats, may have suggested the third plot in Shakspeare's drama—the love and elopement of Jessica and Lorenzo.

The third book, which, like the preceding ones, consists of ten stories, is intended to show that the greatest and finest ladies of Italy, in the author's time, indulged in gallantries of a nature which did them very little honour indeed. Of these tales, the heroes are, for the most part, grooms, negroes, and muleteers.

In the twenty following stories of Massuccio there are related love adventures, which have sometimes a fortunate and sometimes a disastrous issue, and which are conducted to their termination by means occasionally ingenious, but always unlikely or incredible.

41. Is the story of two brothers from France, who, during their residence at Florence, fell in love with two sisters of that city. One of these sisters, though married, makes an assignation with her lover, and while she remains with him during night his brother is sent to lie down by the husband, that the blank may not be perceived. Day-light approaches without any prospect of his being relieved from this uncomfortable and precarious situation. At

length the whole family bursts in with lights, when he is informed that the husband is from home, and is much tantalized on discovering that he has passed the night with the unmarried sister of whom he was enamoured. I have mentioned this story as it has been copied in one of the novels of Scarron—La Precaution inutile. It is also the second novel of Parabosco, and it is, perhaps, more probable that Scarron borrowed from him than from Massuccio, because in Parabosco, as in the French tale, the scene is laid in Spain, and not in Italy. It also suggested the incidents of one of the Novelas Exemplares of Cervantes, the story of Don Lewis de Castro and Rodrigo de Montalvo, in Guzman d' Alfarache, (Part ii. c. 4,) and the plot of the Little French Lawyer in Beaumont and Fletcher, which, next to Rule a Wife and have a Wife, is generally considered as the best of their comedies.

45. A Castilian scholar, passing through Avignon to Bologna, bribes the good-will of a lady of some rank at the former place. He grievously repents the price he had paid, and farther prosecuting his journey towards Italy, meets at an inn with the lady's husband, who was returning to France. This gentleman inquires the cause of his distress; and the scholar, after some hesitation,

not knowing who he is, informs him of his adventure at Avignon, and the name of the lady who was concerned in it. The husband, with much entreaty, prevails on his new-acquired friend to return to Avignon, where he is not a little disconcerted at being conducted to sup at a house which he had so much cause to remember. After a splendid entertainment, the husband upbraids his wife with her conduct, compels her to return the ill-gained money to the scholar, dismisses him with much civility, and afterwards secretly poisons his wife. Part of this story has probably been suggested by the 2d of the first day of the Pecorone. (See above, vol. ii. p. 369.)

The origin of Shakspeare's Romeo and Juliet has generally been referred to the Giuletta of Luigi da Porto. This tale Mr Douce has attempted to trace as far back as the Greek romance by Xenophon Ephesius; but when it is considered that this work was not published in the lifetime of Luigi da Porto, I do not think the resemblance so strong as to induce us to believe that it was seen by that novelist. His Giuletta is evidently borrowed from the 33d novel of Massuccio, which must unquestionably be regarded as the ultimate origin of the celebrated drama of Shakspeare, though it has escaped, as far as I

know, the notice of his numerous commentators. In the story of Massuccio, a young gentleman, who resided in Sienna, is privately married by a friar to a lady of the same place, of whom he was deeply enamoured. Mariotto, the husband, is forced to fly from his country, on account of having killed one of his fellow-citizens in a squabble on the streets. An interview takes place between him and his wife before the separation. After the departure of Mariotto, Giannozza, the bride, is pressed by her friends to marry: she discloses her perplexing situation to the friar, by whom the nuptial ceremony had been performed. He gives her a soporific powder, which she drinks dissolved in water; and the effect of this narcotic is so strong that she is believed to be dead by her friends, and interred according to custom. The accounts of her death reach her husband in Alexandria, whither he had fled, before the arrival of a special messenger, who had been despatched by the friar to acquaint him with the real posture of affairs. Mariotto forthwith returns in despair to his own country, and proceeds to lament over the tomb of his bride. Before this time she had recovered from her lethargy, and had set out for Alexandria in quest of her husband, who meanwhile is apprehended and executed for the murder he had for-

merly committed. Giannozza, finding he was not in Egypt, returns to Sienna, and learning his unhappy fate, retires to a convent, where she soon after dies. The catastrophe here is different from the novel of Luigi da Porto and the drama of Shakspeare, but there is a perfect correspondence in the preliminary incidents. The tale of Massuccio was written about 1470, which was long prior to the age of Luigi da Porto, who died in 1531, or of Cardinal Bembo, to whom some have attributed the greater part of the composition. Nor was it published till some years after the death of Luigi, having been first printed at Venice in 1535. It afterwards appeared in 1539, and lastly at Vicenza, 1731, 4to. These different editions vary as to some trifling incidents, but in all the principal circumstances, except those of the catastrophe, the novel of Luigi da Porto coincides with that of Massuccio. In the dedication Luigi says, that while serving as a soldier in Friuli, the tale was related to him by one of his archers (who always attended him) to beguile the solitary road that leads from Gradisca to Udino. In this story the lovers are privately married by a friar. Romeo is obliged to fly on account of the murder of a Capulet. After his departure the bride's relations insist on giving her in marriage. She drinks

a soporific powder dissolved in water, and is subsequently buried. The news of her death come to Romeo before the messenger sent by the friar. He hastens to the tomb of Giuletta, and there poisons himself; she awakens from her trance before his death; he soon after expires, and Giuletta dies of grief. It is said in Johnson's Shakspeare, that this story is related as a true one in Girolamo de la Corte's History of Verona. It is also told as a matter of fact in the ninth of the second part of Bandello, which corresponds precisely with the tale of Luigi da Porto. Bandello's novel is dedicated to the celebrated Fracastoro, and the incident is said to have happened in the time of Bartolommeo de la Scala. Luigi da Groto, surnamed the Cieco d'Adria, one of the early romantic poets of Italy, who wrote a drama on this subject, declares, that his plot was founded on the ancient annals of his country. In his drama the princess of Adria is in love with Latinus, who was the son of her father's bitterest enemy, and had slain her brother in battle. The princess is offered in marriage to the king of the Sabines: in this distress she consults a magician, who administers an opiate. She is soon after found apparently dead, and her body is deposited in the royal sepulchre.

Latinus, hearing of her decease, poisons himself, and comes in the agonies of death to the tomb of the princess. She awakens, and a tender scene ensues—the lover expires in the arms of his mistress, who immediately stabs herself. In this play there is a garrulous old nurse, and it appears, from the coincidence of several passages pointed out by Mr Walker in his Memoir on Italian Tragedy, that the drama of Luigi da Groto must have been seen by Shakspeare. The story of Romeo and Juliet, which was thus popular and prevalent in Italy, passed at an early period into France. It was told in the introduction to a French translation of Boccaccio's Philocopo by Adrien Sevin, published in 1542, and is there related of two Slavonians who resided in the Morea. The lover kills his mistress's brother: he is forced to fly, but promises to return and run off with her: she meanwhile persuades a friar to give her a soporific potion for the convenience of elopement. A vessel is procured by the lover, but, not knowing the lady's part of the stratagem, he is struck with despair at beholding her funeral on landing. He follows the procession to the place of interment, and there stabs himself; when his mistress awakens she stabs herself also. From Bandello the tale was transfer-

red into the collection of tragic stories by Belleforest, and published at Lyons, 1564. In this country it was inserted in Paynter's Palace of Pleasure, but it was from the metrical history of Romeus and Giuliet that Shakspeare chiefly borrowed his plot, as has been shown by many minute points of resemblance. It was by this composition that he was so wretchedly misled in his catastrophe, as to omit the incident of Juliet being roused before the death of her husband, which is the only novel and affecting circumstance in the tale of Luigi da Porto, and the only one in which he has excelled Massuccio. From the garbled and corrupt translations to which he had recourse, the English dramatist has seldom improved on the incidents of the Italian novels. His embellishments consist in the beauty and justness of his sentiments, and the magic of his language.

Besides the Romeo and Juliet of Shakspeare, and the Italian play already mentioned, there are two Spanish dramas on the subject of Romeo and Juliet; one by Fernando Roxas, who was contemporary with Shakspeare, and the other by the celebrated Lopez de Vega. The former coincides precisely with Romeo and Juliet; in the latter, the names are changed, and the catastrophe is

totally different. Thus the lover, who corresponds to Romeo, comes to lament at the tomb of his mistress, but without having taken poison, and the lady having recovered from the effects of the soporific draught, they fly to an old uninhabited chateau belonging to her father, which he seldom visited. Meanwhile the father resolves to console himself for the loss of his daughter by entering into a second marriage, and goes to celebrate the nuptial festival at the castle where the lovers had sought refuge. On his first arrival he beholds his daughter, and supposing her to be a spirit, he is struck with remorse. The lady aids the deception, reproaches him as the cause of her death, and declares that he can only obtain pardon by reconciling himself to her injured lover. On his sudden appearance the old man declares, that were his daughter yet alive, he would willingly bestow her on him in marriage; and the fond pair embrace this favourable opportunity of throwing themselves at the feet of the father, to claim fulfilment of his promise.

SABADINO DELLI ARIENTI,[1]

who comes next to Massuccio in the chronological order of Italian novelists, was a citizen of Bologna, and a man of some note in his own district. He is said to have been a great classical scholar, and to have written a valuable history of his native city. His tales, which are dedicated to Duke Hercules of Ferrara, are entitled Le Porrettane, because, as the author informs us, they were written for the amusement of the ladies and gentlemen who one season attended the baths of Porretta in the vicinity of Bologna. The date of the composition of these stories is supposed to be nearly the same with that of the first edition, which was published in 1483 at Bologna: Since that time there have been four or five impressions, the latest of which is earlier than the middle of the 16th century. Of the seventy-one novels which this author has written, some describe tragical events, but the

[1] Le Porrettane, dove si tratta di settantuna Novelle, con amorosissimi documenti e dichiarazione dell' anima; con una disputa e sentenza chi debba tenere il primo luogo il Dottore, o il Cavaliero, &c.

greater number are light and pleasant adventures, or merely repartees and bon-mots. All of them are written in a style which is accounted barbarous, being full of Lombard phrases and expressions.

The fourth of Sabadino is from the eighth of Petrus Alphonsus, where a vine-dresser's wife is engaged with a gallant while her husband works in his vineyard. The husband returns, having wounded one eye, but the woman, by kissing him on the other, contrives her lover's escape. This is the forty-fourth of Malespini, twenty-third of Bandello, and sixteenth of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles. It also occurs in the Arcadia di Brenta, (p. 131); the Contes du Sieur d' Ouville, &c. &c.

20. Is a tolerable story of a knavish citizen of Araldo, who borrows twenty ducats from a notary. As the citizen refused to pay at the time he promised, and as no evidence existed of the loan, he is summoned, at the solicitation of the notary, to be examined before the Podestà. He alleges to his creditor, as an excuse for not appearing, that his clothes are in pawn, an obstacle which the notary removes by lending him his cloak. Thus equipped he proceeds to the hall of justice, and is examined apart from his creditor by the magistrate. He positively denies the debt, and attributes the

charge to a strange whim which had lately seized the notary, of thinking every thing his own property: "For instance," continues he, "if you ask him whose mantle this is that I wear, he will instantly lay claim to it." The notary being called in and questioned, answers of course as his debtor foretold, and is, in consequence, accounted a madman by all who are present. The judge orders the poor man to be taken care of, and the defendant is allowed to retain both the ducats and mantle.

59. A gentleman of the illustrious family of Bolognini in Italy, entered into the service of Ladislaus, king of Sicily, and became a great favourite of his master. Being his huntsman, falconer, and groom, besides prime minister, he met with many accidents in the course of his employments: one day his eye was struck out by a branch of a tree, and on another occasion he was rendered lame for the rest of his life by falling over a precipice. His address, however, remained, and his knowledge of the art of succeeding in a court. On one occasion, while following Ladislaus to Naples, the bark in which he sailed was separated in a storm from the king's vessel, and seized by corsairs, who carried him to Barbary, and disposed of him to certain Arabians. By them he was conveyed to the most remote part of their deserts, and sold, under the

name of Eliseo, to an idolatrous monarch in that region. At first he kept his master's camels, but rose by degrees to be his vizier and favourite. He filled this situation a long time, but at length the king died. It was the custom of the country, on an occasion of that sort, to cut the throats of all those who had discharged high employments about the person of the monarch, and inter them along with their master. Eliseo, of course, was an indispensable character at this ceremony. In an assembly of the great council and people, which was held preparatory to its celebration, he thus addressed them:—"My lords and gentlemen, I would esteem myself too happy to follow my master to the other world, but you perceive that being blind and lame, and of a delicate constitution, I cannot render him services so effectual as some other lords and gentlemen present, who are strong and well-made, and who, besides, having the use of their limbs, will reach him much earlier than I can. I am only fit for conversation, and to bring him the news of the state. After the funeral ceremonies, in which the great officers of his deceased majesty will readily officiate, you will chuse a king. I had best postpone my departure till the election is over, and bear the respects of the new sovereign to his predecessor." He then enlarged on the

qualities which their future monarch should possess, and said such fine and popular things on this subject, that he not only obtained the respite he solicited, but was unanimously chosen king after the interment of the late sovereign and the officers of his household. Every nation has been fond of relating stories of the advancement of their countrymen in foreign lands by the force of talents. In this country, Turkey has generally been fixed on as the theatre of promotion. The above stories may perhaps appear dull to the reader; they are, nevertheless, a very favourable specimen of the merit and originality of Sabadino.

This author was the last of the Italian novelists who wrote in the 15th century, and

AGNOLO FIRENZUOLA

is the first of the succeeding age. This writer was an inhabitant of Florence, and an abbot of Vallombrosa; but his novels, which are ten in number, are not such as might be expected from his clerical situation. Most of them are interwoven in his Ragionamenti, printed at Florence, 1548. He tells us that a mistress, who lived with him, intended *tessere ragionamenti*, but that she died of a fever

before she could execute this design, which, while on her death-bed, she solicited him to accomplish. This story is probably feigned, but it seems a singular fiction for an ecclesiastic.

The first tale of Firenzuola, is one that has become very common in modern novels and romance. A young man being shipwrecked on the coast of Barbary, is picked up by some fishermen, and sold to the bashaw of Tunis. He there becomes a great favourite of his master, and still more of his mistress, whom he persuades not only to assist in his escape, but to accompany him in his flight. The seventh is a story repeated in many of the Italian novels. A person lays out a sum to be paid as the dowery of a young woman when she is married. The mother, in order to get hold of this money, comes to the benefactor, accompanied by her daughter, and a person who assumed the character of husband. The donor insists that the new-married couple should remain all night in his house, and assigns them the same apartment. Firenzuola had this story from the fourteenth of Fortini, and it has been imitated in the novels of Grazzini, called Le Lasca (Part 2, N. 10). Most of the other tales of Firenzuola, in which the chief characters are nuns and monks, can hardly be extracted. They are all, however, accounted re-

markable for that elegance of style which distinguishes the works of Firenzuola. These consist of two dialogues on beauty, a few comedies, and a free translation of the Ass of Apuleius.

About the same time with Firenzuola lived Luigi da Porto, whose novel has already been mentioned, and the celebrated Molza, who wrote a hundred novels, all of which have been lost except four, and none of them, while extant, obtained a reputation equal to his other works. Nearly at the same period in which Molza and Firenzuola flourished,

GIOVANNI BREVIO,

a Venetian canon of Ceneda, wrote six novels, which were accounted remarkable for the liveliness of their style. They were published at Rome along with his *Rime* in 1545, 8vo. The first is the story of a lady who brought a lover to her house during the absence of her husband, who, returning unexpectedly, is surprised at the preparations for a supper, and in the heat of resentment upbraids his wife, and throws every thing into confusion. Meanwhile the lover had fled unseen to the house of a neighbour, who, at his

solicitation, came with him and reproached the husband for breaking up a party he was entertaining, and for whose accommodation the lady had favoured him with the loan of the house.

2. A priest extorts money by passing for a cardinal.

3. Is the story of a father ruined by the extravagance of children, who afterwards neglect him. He pretends he has found a treasure. They treat him well for the rest of his life, but find empty coffers at his death. It is difficult to understand what comfort the father could receive in the attention or caresses of such a family. This novel is the subject of Piron's comedy of the Fils Ingrats, afterwards published by him under the title of L' Ecole des Peres, the representation of which, in 1728, was the epoch of the revival of the *Comedie Larmoiante*. In the drama, however, the fiction of the treasure is invented by the father's valet, and entraps the young men into a restitution of the wealth they had obtained, in order to get the whole by this proof of disinterested affection. The story is also in the Pieuses Recreations d' Angelin Gazeé, and is told in the Colloquia Mensalia of Luther, among other examples, to deter fathers from dividing their property during

life among their children—a practice to which they are in general little addicted.

4. Is the renowned tale of Belfagor. This story, with merely a difference of names, was originally told in an old Latin MS., which is now lost, but which, till the period of the civil wars in France, remained in the library of Saint Martin de Tours. But whether Brevio or Machiavel first exhibited the tale in an Italian garb, has been a matter of dispute among the critics of their country. It was printed by Brevio during his life, and under his own name, in 1545; and with the name of Machiavel, in 1549, which was about eighteen years after that historian's death. Both writers probably borrowed the incidents from the Latin MS., for they could scarcely have copied from each other. The story is besides in the Nights of Straparola, but much mutilated; and has also been imitated by Fontaine. The following is the outline of the tale, as related by Machiavel. All the souls which found their way to hell, complained that they had been brought to that melancholy predicament by means of their wives: Minos and Rhadamanthus reported the case to Pluto, who summoned an infernal council to consult on the best mode of ascertaining the truth or falsehood of such statements. After some deliberation it was determi-

ned, that one of their number should be sent into the world, endowed with a human form, and subjected to human passions; that he should be ordered to chuse a wife as early as possible, and after remaining above ground for ten years, should report to his infernal master the benefits and burdens of matrimony. Though this plan was unanimously approved, none of the fiends were disposed voluntarily to undertake the commission, but the lot at length fell on the arch-demon Belfagor. Having received the endowments of a handsome person, and abundant wealth, he settled in Florence under the name of Roderic of Castile, and gave out that he had acquired his fortune in the east. As he was a well-bred gentleman-like demon, he found no difficulty in being introduced to the first families of the place, and of obtaining in marriage a young woman of high rank and unblemished reputation. The expence of fine clothes and furniture, for which his wife had a taste, he did not grudge, but as her family were in indifferent circumstances, he was obliged to fit out her brothers for the Levant. His lady, too, being somewhat of a scold, no servant remained long with him, and all were of course more anxious to waste than save their master's substance. Finally, being disappointed in his hopes of obtaining remittances

from his brothers-in-law, he is forced to escape from his creditors. During their pursuit he is for some time concealed by a peasant, whose fortune he promises to make in return. Having disclosed to him the secret of his real name and origin, he undertakes to possess the daughter of a rich citizen of Florence, and not to leave her till the peasant comes to her relief. As soon as the countryman hears of the young lady's possession, he repairs to her father's house, and promises to cure her by a certain form of exorcism. He then approaches the ear of the damsel; "Roderic," says he, "I am come, remember your promise." "I shall," whispers he; "and, to make you still richer, after leaving this girl I shall possess the daughter of the king of Naples." The peasant obtains so much fame by this cure, that he is sent for to the Neapolitan princess, and receives a handsome reward for the expulsion of Belfagor. At his departure the demon reminds him that he has fulfilled his promise, and that he is now determined to effect his ruin. In prosecution of this plan he possesses the daughter of Lewis VII. of France, and, as he anticipated, the peasant is immediately sent for. A scene is here described, resembling that in the fabliau Le Vilain Medecin, and Moliere's Medecin malgré lui.

The rustic was forcibly carried to the capital of France, and, on his arrival, he in vain represented that certain demons were so obdurate they could not be expelled. The king plainly stated, that he must either cure his daughter or be hanged. All his private entreaties being unable to prevail on Belfagor to dislodge, he had recourse to stratagem. He ordered a scaffold, with an altar to be erected, whither the princess was conducted, and mass performed, all which preparations Belfagor treated with profound contempt. In the middle of the ceremonies, however, as had been previously arranged, a great band, with drums and trumpets, approached with much clamour on one side. "What is this?" said Belfagor; "O, my dear Roderic," answered the peasant, "there is your wife coming in search of you." At these words Belfagor leaped out of the princess, and descended to hell to confirm the statement, the truth of which he had been commissioned to ascertain.

The notion of this story is ingenious, and might have been productive of entertaining incident, had Belfagor been led, by his connubial connection, from one crime to another. But Belfagor is only unfortunate, and in no respect guilty: nor did any thing occur during his abode on earth, that testified the power of woman in leading us to final

condemnation. The story of the peasant, and the possession of the princesses, bears no reference to the original idea with which the tale commences, and has no connection with the object of the infernal deputy's terrestrial sojourn.

This novel has suggested the plot of an old English comedy, called Grim, the Collier of Croydon, printed 1602; and also Belphegor, or the Marriage of the Devil, 1691.

GIROLAMO PARABOSCO,[1]

who lived about the year 1550, was a celebrated musician, and a poet like most of the other Italian novelists. Though born at Placentium, he passed the greater part of his life at Venice, where he acquired that intimate acquaintance with the manners of the inhabitants which is conspicuous in his work. His tales commence with an eulogy on that city, which he makes the theatre of their relation. He feigns that seventeen gentlemen, among whom were Peter Aretine, and Speron Speroni, agreed, according to a custom at Venice,

[1] Diporti di Girolamo Parabosco.

to pass a few days in huts erected in the water, for the amusement of fishing, at a short distance from the city. The weather proving unfavourable for that diversion on their first arrival, they employed themselves with relating tales. This entertainment continued for three days, and, as each gentleman tells a story, the whole number amounts to seventeen. These, intermixed with songs and reflections, were published first at Venice without date, and afterwards at the same place in 1552 and 1558. Some of these stories are tragical, and others comical. Though there were no ladies present, and Peter Aretine was of the party, the tales are less immoral than most imitations of Boccaccio. It is needless, however, to give any examples, as they are of the same species with other Italian novels—had little influence on subsequent compositions, and possess no great interest or originality: thus, the 2d of Parabosco coincides with the 41st of Massuccio; the 4th has been suggested by the 10th of the 4th day of Boccaccio; the 1st part of the 5th is from the Meunier d' Aleus, through the medium of the 106th of Sacchetti, the 2d part is from the 8th of the 8th day of the Decameron, &c. &c. There are nine stories in the first day of Parabosco, and

seven in the second, which concludes with the discussion of four questions, as whether there is most pleasure in hope or enjoyment. In the third day there is only one tale, and the rest of the time is occupied with the relation of bon mots, which are methodically divided into the defensive, aggressive, &c. They are in general very indifferent: a musician playing in a brutal company, is told he is an Orpheus. A man performing on a lute asserts he had never learnt to play, and is desired to reserve his assurances for those who suppose he has. One boasted he knew a knave by sight, whence it is inferred by a person present, that he must have often studied his mirror, &c. &c. Though Parabosco has only left seventeen novels, it would appear that he had intended to favour the public with a hundred, which must have been nearly ready for publication from what he says in one of his letters.—" Spero fra pochi giorni mandar fuora Cento Novelle; diciasette delle quali per ora n' ho mandato in questi miei Diporti."

MARCO CADEMOSTO DA LODI[1]

was an ecclesiastic, and lived in the Roman court during the pontificates of Leo X. and Clement VII., by both of whom he was patronised. His six novels were printed at Rome in 1543, along with his *rime*, for he too was a poet, like the other Italian novelists. He informs us in his proœmium, that he had lost twenty-seven tales he had written during the sack of Rome, all of which were founded on fact: of the six that remain, the only one that is tolerable is that of an old man, who, by will, leaves his whole fortune to hospitals. An ancient and faithful servant of the family having learned the nature of this iniquitous testament, informs his master's sons. In the course of the night on which the old gentleman dies, he is removed to another room, and the domestic, in concert with the young men, lies down in his place; he then sends for a notary, and dictates a will in favour of his master's sons, bequeathing himself, to their no small disappointment, an enormous legacy.

We shall be detained but a short while with the remaining Italian novelists, as they have in a

[1] Sonetti ed altre rime, con alcune Novelle.

great measure only imitated their predecessors, and frequently indeed merely repeated, in different language, what had formerly been told.

The succeeding novelists are chiefly distinguished from those who had gone before them by more frequent employment of sanguinary incidents, and the introduction of scenes of incredible atrocity and accumulated horrors. None of their number have carried these to greater excess than

GIOVANNI GIRALDI CINTHIO,[1]

author of the Ecatommithi, and the earliest of the remaining novelists, who, from their merit or popularity, are at all worthy of being mentioned. Cinthio was born at Ferrara, early in the sixteenth century; he was secretary to Hercules II., duke of Ferrara, and was a scholar and poet of some eminence. His death happened in 1573, but farther notices concerning his life may be found in Barotti's Defence of the Ferrarese Authors against the Censure of Fontanini. It would appear from an address with which he concludes, that his tales had been written at an early period of life, and retouched after a long interval :—

[1] Hecatommithi, overo Cento Novelle di Giraldi Cinthio.

Poscia ch' a te, lavor de miei primi anni,
Accio c' habbia nel duol qualche ristoro,
Mi chiaman nell età grave gli affanni, &c.

and again,

Dunque se stata sei gran tempo occolta,
O de miei giovenili anni fatica,
In cui studio gia posi, e cura molta.

The novels of Cinthio were first printed in 1565, at Montreal, in Sicily, 2 vols. 8vo.; afterwards at Venice, 1566; and thirdly, at the same place, in 1574. Though the title of Hecatommithi imports, that the book contains a hundred tales, it in fact consists of a hundred and ten; as there are ten stories in the introduction which precedes the first decade. The whole work is divided into two parts, each of which includes five decades, and every decade, as the name implies, comprehends ten stories.

The introduction contains examples of the happiness of connubial, and the miseries of illicit love. The 1st decade is miscellaneous; 2. Histories of amours carried on in opposition to the will of relatives or superiors; 3. Of the infidelity of wives and husbands; 4. Of those who, laying snares for others, accomplish their own ruin; 5. Examples

of connubial fidelity in trying circumstances; 6. Acts of generosity and courtesy; 7. Bon mots and sayings; 8. Examples of ingratitude; 9. Remarkable vicissitudes of fortune; 10. *Atti di Cavalleria.*

Cinthio deduces the relation of these multifarious tales from the sack of Rome in 1527. He feigns, that on account of the confusion and pestilence by which that event was followed, ten ladies and gentlemen sailed for Marseilles, and, during the voyage, related stories for each other's entertainment. Thus, in many external circumstances, Cinthio has imitated Boccaccio; as in the escape from the pestilence, which is the cause of the relation of many Italian novels—the number of the tales—the Greek appellation bestowed on them, and the limitation to a particular subject during each day. In the tales, however, little resemblance can be traced. The style of Cinthio is laboured, while extravagance and improbability are the chief characteristics of his incidents. It is asserted, in a preface to the third edition of the Ecatommithi, that all the stories are founded on fact; but certainly none of the Italian novels have less that appearance, except where he has ransacked the ancient histories of Greece and Rome for horrible

events. At the end of the 5th decade, the story of Lucretia is told of a Dalmatian lady. The 3d of the 8th decade, where a Scythian princess agrees with her sister's husband to murder their consorts, and afterwards ascend the throne, by poisoning the old king, over whose dead body his guilty daughter drives her chariot, is nothing more than the story of Tullia and Lucius Tarquinius Superbus. Sometimes Cinthio has only given a dark and gloomy colouring to the inventions of preceding novelists. For example, the 4th of the 4th decade, is just the story of Richard Minutolo in the Decameron, (see above, vol. ii. p. 266,) except that the contriver of the fraud is a villainous slave, instead of a gay and elegant gentleman, and that the lady, on the artifice being discovered, stabs the traitor and herself, in place of being reconciled to her lover, as represented by Boccaccio.

Of the stories which are his own invention, the 2d tale of the 2d decade is a striking example of those incidents of accumulated horror and atrocity, in which Cinthio seems to have chiefly delighted, and which border on the ludicrous when carried to excess. Orbecche, daughter of Sulmone, king of Persia, fell in love with a young Armenian, called Orontes, and for his sake refu-

sed the hand of the prince of Parthia, who had been selected as her husband by her father. Sulmone long remained ignorant of the cause of her disobedience, but at last discovered that she was privately married to Orontes, and had two children by him. The unfortunate family escaped from his vengeance, and resided for nine years in an enemy's country. At the end of this period Sulmone feigned that he had forgiven his daughter, and persuaded her husband to come to the capital of Persia with his two children, but embraced an opportunity of making away with them at the first interview. On the arrival of his daughter, who followed her husband to Persia, he received her with apparent tenderness, and informed her he had prepared a magnificent nuptial present. He then invited her to lift a veil which concealed three basons. In one of these she found the head of her husband, and in the two others the bodies of her children, and the poniards with which they had been slain still remaining in their throats. Orbecche seized the daggers, presented them to her father, and begged he would complete his vengeance. The king returned them with a ghastly composure, assuring her that no farther revenge was desired by him. This *sang froid*, which seemed so ill warranted by circumstances, exasperated

Orbecche to such a degree, that she threw herself on her father, and forthwith despatched him. No other person now remaining to be massacred, (as her mother and brother had been slain by Sulmone, in the early part of his reign,) she plunged one of the poniards into her own bosom. On this tale, as on several others of the Ecatommithi, the author himself has founded a tragedy, which is one of the most ancient and most esteemed in the Italian language.

The 7th of the 3d decade, which is much in the same style, though more interesting and pathetic, has furnished Shakspeare with the plot of the tragedy of Othello. Desdemona, a Venetian lady, being struck with admiration at the noble qualities of a Moor, called Othello, married him in defiance of her kindred, and accompanied him to Cyprus, where he had received a high command from the republic. The Moor's standard-bearer, or *ancient*, who was a great favourite of his master, became enamoured of Desdemona. Exasperated at her refusal to requite his affection, and jealous of the Moor's captain, whom he believed to be her favoured lover, he resolved on the destruction of both. The captain having been deprived of his command, for some military offence, and the ensign understanding that Desdemona solicit-

ed her husband with much earnestness for his restoration, seized this opportunity of instilling suspicion into the mind of the Moor. He afterwards stole a handkerchief which she had received from her husband, and which the ensign informed him had been bestowed on the captain. The jealousy of the Moor received strength, when, on asking his wife for the handkerchief, he found she was unable to produce it, and was confirmed by the ensign afterwards contriving to show it to the Moor in the hands of a woman in the captain's house. Othello now resolved on the death of his wife and the captain. The ensign was employed in the murder of the latter: he failed in the attempt, but afterwards, in concert with the Moor, despatched Desdemona, and pulled down part of the house, that it might be believed she had been crushed in its ruins. Soon after Othello conceived a violent hatred against the ensign, and deprived him of the situation he held. Enraged at this treatment, he revealed to the senate the crimes of his master, who was in consequence recalled from Cyprus. The torture to which he was brought had no effect in extorting a confession. Banishment, consequently, was the only penalty inflicted, but he was afterwards privately murdered in the place of his exile by the

the relations of Desdemona. The ensign subsequently expired on the rack, to which he was put for a crime totally unconnected with the main subject of the novel.

It may be remarked, that in the drama of Shakspeare, Iago is not urged on, as in Cinthio, by love turned to hatred, but by a jealousy of the Moor and his own wife, and resentment at the promotion of Cassio. He also employs his wife to steal the handkerchief, which in the novel he performs himself. On this theft the whole proof against Desdemona rests, both in the play and novel; but in the latter the Moor insists on seeing it in the captain's hands, and the ensign contrives to throw the handkerchief into the possession of the captain, which in the drama is the result of chance. The character also of the Moor is entirely the invention of the English poet. Shakspeare's noble Othello is in Cinthio sullen, obstinate, and cruel. The catastrophe, too, as was necessary for theatrical exhibition, has been greatly altered.

In all these important variations, Shakspeare has improved on his original. In a few other particulars he has deviated from it with less judgment; in most respects he has adhered with close imitation. The characters of Iago, Desdemona, and Cassio, are taken from Cinthio with scarcely

a shade of difference. The obscure hints and various artifices of the villain to raise suspicion in the Moor, are the same in the novel and the drama. That scene where Othello's jealousy is so much excited, by remarking the gestures of Cassio, is copied from the Italian, as also his singular demand of receiving ocular demonstration of the guilt of Desdemona.

The 10th novel of the 5th decade has furnished to Dryden that part of his tragedy of Amboyna which relates to the rape of Isabinda by Harman.

In the 6th of the 6th decade, we are told, that Livia, a noble Italian matron, had a son, who was unfortunately stabbed in a quarrel with a young man of his own age. His enemy flying from the officers of justice, unconsciously seeks and obtains refuge in the house of the mother of the deceased, who had not yet been informed of her son's fate. After she had given her word for the security of the fugitive, her son's dead body is brought home, and by the arrival of the officers in pursuit, she discovers that she harboured his murderer. From a strict sense of honour she refuses to deliver him up, and about half an hour afterwards adopts him in the room of the child she had lost. This story is the underplot of Beaumont and Fletcher's Custom of the Country, where Guiomar, a widow

lady of Lisbon, protects Rutilio when she supposed that he had killed her son Duarte, whom he had left for dead, after a scuffle in the streets. Don Duarte, however, recovering from his wound, the lady accepts Rutilio as her husband. Part of Cibber's comedy, Love makes a Man, is founded on a similar incident.

The 5th novel of the 8th decade, which has suggested the comedy of Measure for Measure, is equally sanguinary and improbable with the story of the Moor. A young man of Inspruck is condemned to be beheaded for having ravished a young woman in that city. His sister goes to solicit his pardon from the chief magistrate, who was reputed a man of austere virtue and rigid justice. On certain conditions he agrees to grant her request, but these being fulfilled, he presents her on the morning which followed her compliance with the corpse of her brother. The emperor Maximin having been informed of this atrocious conduct, commands the magistrate to marry the woman he had betrayed, that she might be entitled to his wealth. He then orders the head of the culprit to be struck off; but when the sentence is on the point of execution, the bridegroom is pardoned at the intercession of the lady he had been forced to espouse.

Many stories of a villainy of this nature were current about the time that Cinthio wrote his Ecatommithi. A similar crime was, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, believed of a favourite of Lewis XI. of France, and in the 17th chapter of Stephens' Apology for Herodotus, it is attributed to the Prevost de la Vouste; but there the lady sacrifices her honour for the sake of a husband, and not of a brother. We also read in Lipsii Monita et Exempla Politica, that Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, executed one of his noblemen for an offence of this infernal description, but previously, as in the novel of Cinthio, compelled him to espouse the lady he had deceived,—a story which is related in the Spectator, (No. 491.) A like treachery, as every one knows, was at one period attributed to Colonel Kirke. The novel of Cinthio passed into the tragic histories of Belleforest. The immediate original, however, of Measure for Measure, was Whetstone's play of Promos and Cassandra, published in 1578. In that drama the crime of the brother is softened into seduction: Nor is he actually executed for his transgression, as a felon's head is presented in place of the one required by the magistrate. The king being complained to, orders the magistrate's head to be struck off, and the sister begs his life, even

before she knows that her brother is safe. Shakspeare has adopted the alteration in the brother's crime, and the substitution of the felon's head. The preservation of the brother's life by this device might have been turned to advantage, as affording a ground for the intercession of his sister; but Isabella pleads for the life of Angelo before she knows her brother is safe, and when she is bound to him by no tie, as the duke does not order him to marry Isabella. From his own imagination Shakspeare has added the character of Mariana, Angelo's forsaken mistress, who saves the honour of the heroine by being substituted in her place. Isabella, indeed, had refused, even at her brother's entreaty, to give up her virtue to preserve his life. This is an improvement on the incidents of the novel, as it imperceptibly diminishes our sense of the atrocity of Angelo, and adds dignity to the character of the heroine. The secret superintendence, too, of the duke over the whole transaction, has a good effect, and increases our pleasure in the detection of the villain. In the fear of Angelo, lest the brother should take revenge "for so receiving a dishonoured life, with ransom of such shame," Shakspeare has given a motive to conduct which, in his prototypes, is attributed to wanton cruelty.

The 9th of the 10th decade, which relates to an absurd competition between a Pisan general and his son for the reward assigned to the person who had performed the most gallant action against the enemy, is the foundation of Beaumont and Fletcher's tiresome tragedy the Laws of Candy. That drama opens with a ridiculous competition between Cassilane, general of Candy, and his son Antinous, as to which had performed the noblest exploit against the Venetians: the soldiers and senate decide in favour of the son, who thus becomes entitled, by the laws of Candy, to claim whatever he chuses. He very foolishly demands that a huge brass statue of his father should be set up on the Capitol, and is persecuted by his jealous parent, during the three last acts, with unrelenting cruelty.

Of all the tragic stories of Cinthio, the only one truly pathetic is that of a mother who by mistake poisons her only son in administering a draught to him while sick. The death-bed scene, in which the father commits the boy to the care of his mother; the beautiful picture of maternal care and tenderness by which it is succeeded—her feverish anxiety during his illness—her heart-rending lamentations on discovery of the fatal error settling on his death into a black despair, which

rejects all consolation, and thence, by a natural transition, rises to ungovernable phrensy, all wring the heart in a manner which leaves us to regret that this novelist had told so many stories of Scythian and Armenian tyrants, who massacre whole tribes and generations without exciting the smallest sympathy or emotion.

All the tales of Cinthio, however, are not of the sanguinary and melancholy nature of those already mentioned. Some of them, though tragic in their commencement, have a happy conclusion, as the 6th of the 8th, in which the 68th of the Cento Novelle Antiche, and the Fabliau D' un Roi, qui voulut faire bruler le fils de son Seneschal, is applied to a Turkish bashaw and a Christian slave) see above, vol. ii. p. 220).

The 8th of the 9th decade is the story of a widow lady, who concealed a treasure in her house during the siege of Carthage. A daughter of the Roman soldier who had obtained this mansion being disappointed in love, resolved to hang herself; but in tying the rope she removed a beam which discovered the treasure, and completely consoled her for all misfortunes. This story was transferred to Paynter's Palace of Pleasure, under name of the Maids of Carthage. It seems also to have suggested the concluding incident of

the old ballad the Heir of Linne, and the second part of Le fils de Medecin Sacan, one of Gueulette's Contes Tartares.

Some of the novels of Cinthio are meagre examples of the generosity of the family of Este, and convince us that in the author's age nothing was more rare than genuine liberality. The 3d of the 6th decade, however, is a remarkable instance of the continence of a duke of Ferrara, which has been told, in Luther's Colloquia Mensalia, of the Emperor Charles V., and which I have also somewhere seen related of the Chevalier Bayard.

A few stories of this novelist are intended as comical. In the 3d of the 1st decade, a soldier travelling with a philosopher and astrologer, the wise men mistake their military companion for a silly fellow; and as they were reduced to a single loaf of bread, resolve to cozen him out of his share. They accordingly propose that it should belong to the person who experiences the most delightful dream in the course of the ensuing night. The soldier, who perceived their drift, rose while they were asleep, eat the loaf, and on the morrow reported this substantial incident, as the dream with which he had been favoured. This story corresponds precisely with the eighteenth tale of Petrus Alphonsus, except that in the east-

ern original the actors are two citizens and a countryman: it is also related in Historia Jeschuae Nazareni, a life of our Saviour, of Jewish invention. From the sixteenth of Alphonsus, Cinthio has also derived a story (ninth of first decade,) of a merchant who loses a bag containing 400 crowns. He advertises it, with a reward to any one who finds it; but when brought to him by a poor woman, he attempts to defraud her of the promised recompence, alleging that, besides the 400 crowns, it contained some ducats, which he had neglected to specify in the advertisement, and which she must have purloined. The marquis of Mantua, to whom the matter is referred, decides, that as it wanted the ducats it could not be the merchant's, advises him again to proclaim his loss, and bestows on the poor woman the whole contents of the purse. In Alphonsus we have a philosopher instead of the marquis of Mantua: the merchant, too, pretends that there were two golden serpents, though he had only advertised the loss of one, which made his deceit more flagrant, as the omission was less probable. This story has been imitated in innumerable tales and facetiae, both French and Italian.

The whole of the 7th decade consists of jests and repartees: for example—The poet Dante dining

at the table of Cane Della Scala, lord of Verona, that prince ingeniously contrived to throw all the bones which had been picked at table at the feet of Dante, and on the table being removed affected the utmost amazement at the appetite of a poet who had left such remains. "My lord," replied Dante, "had I been a *dog* (*cane*) you would not have found so many bones at my feet." Even this indifferent story is not original, being copied from the Dantis Faceta Responsio of Poggio, which again is merely an application to an Italian prince and poet of the Fabliau Les Deux Parasites (Le Grand, vol. III. p. 95). The notion, however, of this absurd trick, is older even than the Fabliau, having been played, as Josephus informs us (book xii. c. 4), on the Jew boy Hyrcanus while seated at the table of Ptolemy, king of Egypt: "And being asked how he came to have so many bones before him, he replied, 'Very rightfully, my lord: for they are dogs that eat the flesh and bones together, as these thy guests have done, for there is nothing before them; but they are men that eat the flesh and cast away the bones, as I have now done.' On which the king admired at his answer, which was so wisely made; and bid them all make an acclamation, as a mark of their approbation of his jest, which was truly a facetious one."

Though both the comical and pathetic stories of the Ecatommithi be inferior to those introduced in the Decameron, the work of Cinthio ends perhaps more naturally. The termination of the voyage by the arrival at Marseilles is a better conclusion than the return to Florence. At the end of the whole there is a long poetical address, in which Cinthio has celebrated most of his eminent literary contemporaries in Italy, particularly Bernardo Tasso—

Compagno avendo il suo gentil Figliuolo.

Of all Italian novelists, Cinthio appears to have been the greatest favourite with our old English dramatists. We have already seen that two of the most popular of Shakspeare's plays were taken from his novels Beaumont and Fletcher have been indebted to him for several of their plots; and the incidents of many scattered scenes in the works of these dramatists, as also of Shirley, may be traced to the same source. That spirit, too, of atrocity and bloodshed, which characterises the Ecatommithi, fostered in England a similar taste, which has been too freely indulged by our early tragic writers, most of whom appear to have agreed in opinion with the author of Les Amuse-

mens de Muley Bugentuf—" on auroit toujours vu perir dans mes tragedies non seulement les principaux personnages mais les gardes memes ; J' aurois egorgé jusques au soufleur." Horrible incidents, when extravagantly employed by the novelist or dramatic poet, are merely an abuse of art, to which they are driven by indigence of genius. It is easy to carry such repulsive atrocities to excess; but when thus accumulated, they rather excite a sense of ridicule, than either terror or sympathy. We shudder at the murder of Duncan and weep at the death of Zara, but we can scarcely refrain from laughter at the last scenes of the Andromana of Shirley.

The next Italian novelist is

ANTON FRANCESCO GRAZZINI,

who was commonly called Il Lasca (Mullet), the appellation he assumed in the Academy degli Umidi, to which he belonged, where every member was distinguished by the name of a fish. Lasca was spawned at Florence in the beginning of the 16th century, and was one of the founders of the celebrated academy Della Crusca. He is said to have been a person of a lively and whimsical

disposition: he resided chiefly at the place of his birth, where he also died in 1583. The account of his life, written by Anton Maria Biscioni, which is a complete specimen of the accuracy and controversial minuteness of Italian biography, is prefixed to his *Rime*, printed at Florence in 1741.

The novels of Grazzini are reckoned much better than his poetry; they are accounted very lively and entertaining, and the style has been considered by the Italian critics as remarkable for simplicity and elegance. These tales are divided into three evenings (tre cene). None of these parts were published till long after the death of the author. The second evening, containing ten stories, was first edited. It appeared at Florence in 1743, and afterwards, along with the first evening, which also comprehends ten stories, at Paris, though with the date of London, in 1756. Of the third part, only one tale has hitherto been published.

In order to introduce his stories, Grazzini feigns that one day towards the end of January, some time between the years 1540 and 1550, a party of four young men met after dinner at the house of a noble and rich widow of Florence, for the purpose of visiting her brother, who resided there at the time. This widow had four young female relatives who lived in the house with her. A snow

storm coming on, the company amuse themselves in a court with throwing snow-balls. They afterwards assemble round the fire, and, as the storm increased, the gentlemen are prevailed on to stay to supper, and it is resolved to relate stories till the repast be ready. As the party had little time for preparation, the tales of that evening are short; but at separating it is agreed that they should meet at the distance of a week and fortnight to relate stories more detailed in their circumstances. Although the tales are lost, or at least not edited, which may be presumed to have been the longest, those that are published are of greater length than most of the Italian tales. Of these, many consist of tricks or deceptions practised on fools or coxcombs, which are invariably exaggerated and improbable. The best story in the work, though not free from these defects, is the first of the second evening, which turns on the extreme resemblance of a peasant to a rich fool, who resided in his neighbourhood, and who is accidentally drowned while they are fishing together. The peasant equips himself in the clothes which his companion had left on the bank of the river when he went in to dive for fish, and runs to the nearest house, calling help for the poor countryman. When the body is found, it passes for the corpse

of the rustic, who assumes the manners of the deceased, takes possession of his house, and enjoys this singular heirship till death, without discovering the imposture to any one except his wife, with whom he again performs the marriage ceremony. The relatives of the deceased are not surprised that their kinsman should espouse the widow of a peasant, but are astonished at those gleams of intelligence which occasionally burst forth in spite of counterfeited stupidity. Stories of this nature are not uncommon in fiction, and have all probably had their origin in the Menechmi of Plautus. Idiots seem to have been the favourite heroes of Grazzini: he has another story taken from one of the Fabliaux, or perhaps from Poggio's Mortuus Loquens, of a fool, who is persuaded by his wife that he is dead. He suffers himself to be carried out for interment, but springs up on hearing himself disrespectfully mentioned by some one who witnessed the funeral. The ninth of the second night coincides with the seventh of Firenzuola, and the tenth of the same evening with a tale of Fortini. The last story contains an account of a cruel, and by no means ingenious, trick practised by Lorenzo de Medicis on a physician of Florence.

ORTENSIO LANDO,

a Milanese gentleman, was author of fourteen tales, inserted in his *Varii Componimenti*, printed at Venice, 1552, 8vo. The Italian writers inform us, that he early adopted the opinions of Luther, abandoned his country, and sought refuge in Germany. Little more is known concerning the incidents of the life of this heretical novelist. With regard to his tales, the author himself acquaints us that he imitated Boccaccio, which is the great boast of the novelists who wrote in the middle and towards the close of the 16th century; and of this resemblance they are as anxious to persuade their readers, as their predecessors had been to testify the truth and originality of their stories.

The chief excellence of the tales of Lando is said to consist in the grace and facility of the diction in which they are clothed. The 13th, however, though it wants the merit of originality, being taken from the fabliau of La Houce partie, published by Barbazan, possesses, I think, intrinsic excellence. A Florentine merchant, who had been extremely rich, becoming sickly and feeble, and being no longer of any service to his family,

in spite of his intercessions, was sent by his son to the hospital. The cruelty of this conduct made a great noise in the city, and the son, more from shame than affection, dispatched one of his own children, who was about six years of age, with a couple of shirts to his grandfather. On his return he was asked by his parent if he had executed the commission. "I have only taken one shirt," replied he. "Why so?" asked the father. "I have kept the other," said the child," for the time when I shall send you to the hospital." This answer had the effect of despatching the unnatural son to beg his father's pardon, and to conduct him home from his wretched habitation.

GIOVAN FRANCESCO STRAPAROLA

is not one of the most esteemed Italian novelists, but none of them are more curious for illustrating the genealogy of fiction. Straparola was born at Carravaggio, but resided chiefly at Venice. The first part of his work, which he has been pleased to entitle Tredeci *piacevoli* notte, was printed at Venice in 1550, 8vo, and the second part at the same place, 1554. These were followed by four editions, comprehending the whole work.

The stories amount in all to seventy-four, and are introduced by the fiction of a princess and her father being reduced to a private station, and attaching to themselves a select party of friends, who, for the sake of recreation, and to enjoy the cool air, as it was summer, entertain each other during night with relating stories.

Straparola has borrowed copiously from preceding authors. Thus the 3d of 1st night resembles the story Des Trois Larrons, in the Fabliaux (see above, vol. II. p. 200).

4th of 1st. Is from the 1st of 10th of the Pecorone, which has already been mentioned as the origin of Chaucer's Man of Lawe's Tale (see above, vol. II. p. 383).

2d of 2d. Is from 2d of 2d of the Pecorone, or Les Deux Changeurs, in the Fabliaux (see above, vol. II. p. 372).

3d of 2d. Is nothing more than an old mythological tale, though the metamorphosis it describes is a little less elegant than that of Daphne or Lodona.

4th of 2d. Machiavel and Brevio's story of Belfagor (see above, vol. II. p. 411).

1st of 4th. That part where the Satyr laughs at an old man in tears attending the funeral of a child, whom he imagined to be his own, but who

was, in fact, the son of the chaplain officiating at the ceremony, is from the romance of Merlin.

2d of 4th. From the Ordeal of the Serpent, in the romance of Vergilius (see above, vol. II. p. 138).

4th of 4th. Is from 2d of 1st of the Pecorone, already pointed out as the origin of the Merry Wives of Windsor, &c. (see above, vol. II. p. 369).

3d of 5th. The Fabliau of Les Trois Bossus.

1st of 6th. The first part is Poggio's Nasi Supplementum. The second part, which relates to the reprisal of the husband, is from La Peche de l' Anneau, the 3d story of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, which had been written in France before this time.

3d of 7th. From the 195th of Sacchetti (see above, vol. II. p. 360).

2d of 8th. From Fabliau La Dame qui fut Escoliée.

4th of 8th. Is the 95th of the Cento Novelle Antiche, where a wine merchant, who sold his wine half mixed with water, miraculously loses the half of his gains.

6th of 8th. Is merely an expansion of the Clitella, one of Poggio's Facetiae.

2d of 9th. where the prince of Hungary, being in love with a woman of inferior condition, is sent by his father to travel, and finding on his return

that she is married, expires by her side, and his mistress also dies of grief, is precisely the 8th of 4th day of the Decameron.

3d of 9th. An adventure of Tristan's in Ireland applied to an Italian prince.

3d of 10th. Is the common story of a lady freed by her favourite knight, when on the point of being devoured by a monster.

5th of 12th. From 1st of 10th of the Decameron (see above, vol. II. p. 338).

1st of 13th. Is the Insanus Sapiens, the 2d story in Poggio's Facetiae.

2d of 13th. Is from the 1st of Sozzini, an obscure Italian novelist of the 15th century. A certain person having purchased some capons from a peasant, tells him that he will receive payment from a friar, to whom he conducts him. When they are admitted to the holy man, the purchaser whispers in his ear, that the countryman had come to confess his sins; and then says aloud, that the priest will attend to him instantly. The peasant supposing that his debtor spoke of the money he owed for the capons, allows him to depart without paying their price; but on holding out his hand to receive it, he is desired to kneel down by the confessor, who immediately crosses himself and commences a Paternoster.

Straparola, however, has levied his heaviest contributions on the eighty novels of Jerome Morlini, a work written in Latin, and printed at Naples in 1520, 4to, but now almost utterly unknown, as there was but one edition, and even of this impression most of the copies were deservedly committed to the flames soon after the publication: there has been lately, however, a reprint at Paris from one of the copies still extant. Many of the tales of Straparola are closely imitated, and the last thirteen are literally translated from the Latin of Morlini. One of these is the common story of a physician, who said that the whole practice of physic consisted in three rules,—to keep the feet warm, the head cool, and to feed like the beasts, that is, according to nature.

But although Straparola has copied largely from others, no one has suggested more to his successors. His work seems to have been a perfect storehouse for future Italian novelists, and the French authors of fairy and oriental tales. The 1st tale, which was itself partly suggested by the 52d of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, and was separately published in the 16th century, is the origin of the second of the Tartar Tales, Sinadab fils de Medecin Sacan. Fontaine's Faiseur d' oreilles et racommodeur de moules, is from the first half of

the 1st of 6th. The last part of the 1st of 8th is the often-repeated story Get up and bar the Door. In the conclusion of this tale of Straparola, there is a dispute between a husband and his wife who should shut the door. A stranger comes in, and uses unsuitable familiarities with the wife, who reproaches her husband with his patience, and is in consequence obliged to shut the door, according to agreement. The 2d of 8th may have suggested the Ecole des Maris of Moliere, where two guardians, who are brothers, bring up their wards on different systems of education, the one on a rigid, and the other on a more lax system. The 5th of 8th is the origin of Armin's Italian Tailor and his Boy, printed in 1609.

It is chiefly, however, as being the source of those fairy tales which were so prevalent in France in the commencement of the 18th century, that the Nights of Straparola are curious in tracing the progress of fiction. The northern elves had by this time got possession of Scotland, and perhaps of England, but the stories concerning their more brilliant sisterhood of the East, were concentrated, in the middle of the 16th century, in the tales of Straparola. Thus, for example, the 3d of the 1th is a complete fairy tale. A courtier of the king of Provino overheard the

conversation of three sisters, one of whom said, that if married to the king's butler she would satisfy the royal household with a cup of wine; the second, that if united to the chamberlain she would weave webs of exquisite fineness; the third, that if the king espoused her she would bring him three children, with golden hair, and a star on their forehead. This conversation being reported at court, the king is so much delighted with the fancy of having children of this description that he marries the youngest sister. The jealousy of the queen-mother and the remaining sisters being excited by her good fortune, when the queen in due time gives birth to two sons and a daughter, they substitute three puppies in their place, and throw the children into the stream; they are preserved, however, by a peasant, who is soon enriched by their golden locks, and the pearls they shed instead of tears. Having grown up they come to the capital, and the sisters, discovering who they are, resolve on their destruction. These women ingratiate themselves with the princess, and persuade her to send her brothers on a dangerous expedition, of which the object is to find the beautifying water, which, after many perils, they acquire by directions of a pigeon; and the singing apple, which they obtain by being clothed in enchanted

vestments, which fright away the monster by whom the tree was guarded. But in their attempts, to gain the singing bird they are retarded by being themselves converted into statues. The princess, however, arrives at the spot and takes the bird captive, by whose means they are disenchanted, and finally informed concerning their parentage. In whatever way it may have come to Straparola, this is precisely the story of the Princess Parizade, which forms the last of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, where a queen is promoted in the same manner as in Straparola, and persecuted in the same manner by the jealousy of sisters, whose last effort is persuading the young Princess Parizade to insist on her brothers procuring for her use the talking bird, the singing tree, and golden water. Madame D' Aulnoy's fairy tale of Belle Etoile has been copied either from the Arabian or Italian story. Indeed all the best fairy tales of that lady, as well as most others which compose the Cabinet des Fées, are mere translations from the Nights of Straparola. The 1st of 2d is Mad. D' Aulnoy's Prince Marcassin, and 1st of 3d is her Dauphin. In the 3d of the 3d a beautiful princess, called Biancabella, is married to the king of Naples; but while he is absent prosecuting a

war, his stepmother sends her to a desart, while her own daughter personates Biancabella on the king's return. The queen is succoured by a fairy, to whom she had shown kindness while in the shape of a fawn: by her means she is at length restored to her husband, and the guilty punished. This is the well-known story of Blanchebelle, in the Illustres Feés. That of Fortunio, in the same collection, is from the 4th of the 3d, where the departure of Fortunio from the house of his parents—the judgment he pronounces—the power of metamorphosis which he in consequence receives —his transformation into a bird—his mode of acquiring the princess in marriage—the whole of his adventure in the palace of the Syrens, and final escape from that enchanted residence, are precisely the same as in the well-known tale of Fortunio. The 1st of the 5th is the fairy tale of Prince Guerini, and the 1st of the 11th is the Maitre Chat, or Chat Botté, of Perrault, well known to every child in this country by the name of Puss in Boots. Straparola's cat, however, is not booted, and the concluding adventure of the castle is a little different: in the Italian tale, the real proprietor, who was absent, dies on his way home, so that Constantine is not disturbed in his possession; but in

the Maitre Chat, the Cat persuades the Ogre, to whom it belonged, to change himself into a mouse, and thus acquires the privilege of devouring him. The 1st of 4th, 2d of 5th, 1st of 7th and 5th of 8th, are all in the same style; and some of them may perhaps be more particularly mentioned when we come to treat of the fairy tales which were so prevalent in France early in the 18th century.

But while the Nights of Straparola are thus curious in illustrating the transmission and progress of fiction, few of them deserve to be analyzed on account of their intrinsic merit. The second of the seventh night, however, is a romantic story, and places in a striking light the violence of the amorous and revengeful passions of Italians. Between the main-land of Ragusa and an island at some distance, stood a rock entirely surrounded by the sea. On this barren cliff there was no building, except a church, and a small cottage inhabited by a young hermit, who came to seek alms sometimes at Ragusa, but more frequently at the island. There he is seen and admired by a young woman, confessedly the most beautiful of the inhabitants. As she is neither dilatory nor ceremonious in communicating her sentiments, and as the hermit had received from her beauty corresponding impres-

sions, nothing but a favourable opportunity is wanting to consummate their happiness. With consistent frankness of conduct, she requests her lover to place a lamp in the window of his cottage at a certain hour of the night, and promises that, if thus guided, she will swim to the hermitage. Soon as she spied the signal, she departed on this marine excursion, and arrived at the love-lighted mansion of the recluse. From his cell, to which she was conducted, she returned, undiscovered, at the approach of dawn; and, emboldened by impunity, repeatedly availed herself of the beacon. At length she was remarked by some boatmen, who had nearly fished her up, and who informed her brothers of her amphibious disposition, the spot to which she resorted, and their suspicion of the mode by which she was directed. Her kinsmen forthwith resolve on her death. The youngest brother proceeds in twilight to the rock, and, in order that the signal might not be displayed, implores for that night the hospitality of the hermit. On the same evening the elder brothers privately leave their house in a boat, with a concealed light and a pole. Having rowed to that part of the deep which washed the hermitage, they placed the light on the pole. Their

sister, who appears to have been ever watchful, departed from the island. When the brothers heard her approach, they slipped away through the water, and as the pole was fastened to the boat, they drew the light along with them. The poor wretch, who in the dark saw no other object, followed the delusion to the main sea, in which it was at length extinguished. Three days afterwards her body was washed ashore on the rock, where it was interred by her lover. Thus, adds the approving novelist, the reputations of the brothers and the sister were equally and at once preserved.

The first part of this tale was probably suggested by the classical fable of Hero and Leander. It is the subject of a poem by Bernard le Gentil, entitled Euphrosìné et Melidor.

BANDELLO,

who, in this country at least, is the best known of all the Italian novelists except Boccaccio, was born in the neighbourhood of Tortona. He resided for some time at Milan, where he composed a number of his novels, but, wearied with the tumults and revolutions of that state, he retired, in 1554, to a village in the vicinity of Agen in France.

Here he revised and added to his novels, which some friends had recovered from the hands of the soldiers who burned his house at Milan. In 1550 he was raised by Francis I. to the bishopric of Agen, where he died in 1562. His tales were first published at Lucca, 1554, 4to In the complete editions of Bandello, the work is divided into four parts, the first, second, and third parts containing fifty-nine stories, and the fourth twenty-eight. The whole are dedicated to Ippolita Sforza, though she died before their publication, because it was at her desire that the work was originally undertaken. Besides this general dedication, each novel is addressed to some *Valoroso Signore* or *Chiarissima Signora*, and in this introduction the novelist generally explains how he came to a knowledge of the event he is about to relate. He usually declares that he heard it told in company, mentions the name of the teller, details the conversation by which it was introduced, and pretends to report it, as far as his memory serves, in the exact words of his authority.

The novels of Bandello have been blamed for negligence and impurity of style. Of this the author appears to have been sensible, and repeatedly apologizes for his defects in elegance of diction. "Io non son Toscano, nè bene intendo la proprietà

di quella lingua; anzi mi confesso Lombardo." This is the reason, perhaps, why the tales of Bandello have been less popular in Italy than in foreign countries, where, as we shall now find, they have been much read and imitated.

Part I. 9. From the Fabliau du Chevalier qui confessa sa femme. For the various transmigrations of this story, (see above, vol. ii. p. 305.)

21. A Bohemian nobleman has a magic picture, which, by its colour, shows the fidelity or aberrations of his spouse. This is the origin of Massinger's fanciful play of the Picture, where Mathias, a knight of Bohemia, receives a similar present from the scholar Baptista. The manner in which two Hungarian gentlemen attempt to seduce the lady in her husband's absence, and the contrivance by which she repulses both, are the same in the novel and the drama. Massinger, however, has added the temptation held forth to the husband by the queen.

The incident which relates to the Picture is probably of oriental origin. In the history of Zeyn Alasnam, in the Arabian Nights, the king of the genii gives that prince a mirror, which reflected the representation of the woman whose chastity he might wish to ascertain. If the glass

remained pure she was immaculate ; but, if on the contrary, it became sullied, she had not been always unspotted, or had ceased to desire being so. From the east this magical contrivance was introduced into many early romances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and thence, by a natural transition, found its way into the novels of Bandello.

22. Is the origin of Shakspeare's Much Ado about Nothing, and is the longest tale in the work of Bandello. The deception, which forms the leading incident, is as old as the romance of Tirante the White, but was probably suggested to the Italian novelist by a story in the Orlando Furioso. In the fifth canto of that poem, the duke of Albany is enamoured of Gineura, daughter of the king of Scotland. This princess, however, being prepossessed in favour of an Italian lover, the duke has recourse to stratagem to free himself from this dangerous rival. He persuades the waiting-maid of Gineura to disguise herself for one night in the attire of her mistress, and in this garb to throw down a ladder from the window, by which he might ascend into the chamber of Gineura. The duke had previously so arranged matters that the Italian beheld in concealment this scene, so

painful to a lover. Gineura is condemned to death for the imaginary transgression, and is only saved by the opportune arrival of the paladin Rinaldo, who declares himself the champion of the accused princess.

In the tale of Bandello, which is evidently borrowed from the Orlando, Lionato, a gentleman of Messina had a daughter named Fenicia, who was betrothed to Timbreo de Cardona, a young man of the same city. Girondo, a disappointed lover of the young lady, having resolved to prevent the marriage, sends a confident to Timbreo to warn him of the disloyalty of his mistress, and offers that night to show him a stranger scaling her chamber window. Timbreo accepts the invitation, and in consequence sees the hired servant of Girondo, in the dress of a gentleman, ascend a ladder, and enter the house of Lionato. Stung with rage and jealousy, he next morning accuses his innocent mistress to her father, and rejects the alliance. Fenicia, on hearing this intelligence, sinks down in a swoon. This is followed by a dangerous illness, which gives her father an opportunity of preventing reports injurious to her fame by pretending she is dead. She is accordingly sent to the country, and her funeral rites are celebrated in Messina. Girondo, struck with remorse at having

occasioned her death, now confesses his villainy to Timbreo, after which they proceed together to make the requisite apologies to her family. The sole penance which the father imposes on Timbreo is, that he should espouse a lady of his selection, and that he should not demand to see her previous to the performance of the bridal ceremony. At the nuptial festival, Timbreo, instead of the new bride he awaited, is presented with the innocent and much-injured Fenicia. That part of Much Ado about Nothing, which relates to Hero, though it came to Shakspeare through the medium of the histories of Belleforest, bears a striking resemblance to this novel. In the comedy, as in the tale, the scene is laid at Messina, and the father's name is Leonato. Claudio is about to be married to Hero, but Don John attempts to prevent the match. He consults with a villainous confederate, who undertakes to scale Hero's windows in the sight of Claudio. The lover having been witness to this scene, promulgates the infamy of Hero. She faints on hearing of the accusation: she is believed dead, and her funeral rites are celebrated. The treachery being accidentally detected, Leonato insists that Claudio should marry his niece, instead of his deceased daughter, but at the marriage the destined bride proves to be

Hero. Notwithstanding this general resemblance, the English poet has deviated from his original in three striking alterations. In the first place, Don John is merely anxious to prevent the match from spleen and hatred towards Claudio, while in the tale the villain is entirely actuated by a passion for the bride. Secondly the device by which the jealousy of the lover is awakened, is carried farther in Much Ado about Nothing than in Bandello; in the former the friend of Don John persuades the waiting-maid of Hero to personate her mistress at the window, a stratagem resorted to in the story of Geneura in the Orlando, which shows that Shakspeare had not exclusively borrowed from Bandello. Lastly, in the comedy the deceit is not discovered by the voluntary confession of the traitor, but is detected by a watchman on the street overhearing the associate of the principal villain relating to his friend the success of the stratagem, by way of conversation. In the two first deviations the dramatist, I think, has improved on his original, but in the third has altered to the worse. A similar story with that in the Decameron and Much Ado about Nothing, occurs in Spenser's Faery Queene (B. 2. c. 4.) There Guyon, in the course of his adventures, meets with

a squire, who relates to him that a false friend being enamoured of the same mistress with himself, had instilled suspicions into his mind, which he had afterwards confirmed by treacherously exhibiting himself disguised as a groom at an amorous interview with a waiting-maid, whom he had persuaded to assume the dress of her mistress Claribella. See also the 9th novel of the introduction to the tales of Cinthio.

23. A girl kisses her nurse's eye to allow her lover to escape unseen: This is from the 8th tale of Petrus Alphonsus.

25. Story of the architect and his son, who rob the king's treasury. (See above, vol. ii. p. 379.)

29. Common story of a simple fellow who thinks a sermon is entirely addressed to himself.

42. A gentleman of Valentia privately espouses a woman of low birth; he long delays to make the marriage public, and she at length ascertains that he is about to be united to a lady of high rank. Soon after the celebration of the nuptials, she pretends to have forgiven this breach of faith, and persuades him to come one night to her house, where, when he has fallen asleep, she binds him with ropes, by aid and counsel of a female slave, and after subjecting him to the most frightful mu-

tilation, plunges a dagger in his heart. This is the origin of Beaumont and Fletcher's Triumph of Death, the third of their Four Plays in One, where Lavall, the lustful heir of the duke of Anjou, having abandoned his wife Gabriella, for a new bride, is enticed to her house by contrivance of her servant Mary, and is there murdered while under the influence of a sleeping potion.

57. A king of Morocco, while engaged in the chase, is separated from his attendants, and loses his way. He is received and hospitably entertained by a fisherman, who, ignorant of the quality of his visitor, treats him with considerable freedom, but is loud in his praises of the king. Next morning the rank of his guest is revealed to the fisherman by the arrival of those courtiers who had accompanied their monarch in the chase. A similar occurrence is related in the Fabliaux, as well as many of the old English ballads, and probably had its origin in some adventure of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid. The tale of Bandello is the origin of Le Roi et le Fermier of M. Sedaine.

Part II. 9. Story of Romeo and Juliet. (See above, vol. ii. p. 396.)

15. Pietro, a favourite of Alessandro de Medicis, carried off the daughter of a miller, who soon after proceeded to Florence, and complained of

this violence to the duke. Alessandro went, as on a visit to the house of his favourite, and asked to survey the different apartments. The latter excused himself from showing one of the smaller rooms. The door, however, being at length burst open, and the girl discovered, the duke compelled him to marry her, on pain of losing his head. That part of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy The Maid in the Mill, which relates to Otranto and Florimel, the supposed daughter of the miller Franio, is founded on the above novel.

35. Is the same story with the plot of the Mysterious Mother of Horace Walpole, and the thirtieth tale of the Queen of Navarre. The first part of this story had been already told in the 23d novel of Massuccio. The second part, which relates to the marriage, only occurs in Bandello and the Queen of Navarre. It is not likely, however, that the French or Italian novelists borrowed from one another. The tales of Bandello were first published in 1554, and as the Queen of Navarre died in 1549, it is improbable that she had an opportunity of seeing them. On the other hand, the work of the queen was not printed till 1558, nine years after her death, so it is not likely that any part of it was copied by Bandello, whose tales had been edited some years before. It may

therefore, be presumed that some current tradition furnished both with the horrible incident they report. Indeed Bandello declares in the introduction to the tale, that it happened in Navarre, and was told to him by a lady of that country. In Luther's Colloquia Mensalia, under the article Auricular Confession, it is said to have occurred at Erfurt, in Germany. It is also related in the eleventh chapter of Byshop's Blossoms, and in L' Inceste Innocent, a novel by Des Fontaines, published 1638. Julio de Medrano, an old Spanish writer of the 16th century, says that he heard a similar story when he was in the Bourbonnois, where the inhabitants showed him the house in which the parties had lived, and repeated to him this epitaph, which was inscribed on their tomb :—

Cy-gist la fille, cy-gist le pere,
Cy-gist la soeur, cy-gist le frere;
Cy-gist la femme, et le mary,
Et si n' y a que deux corps icy.

Mr Walpole disclaims having had any knowledge of the tale of the Queen of Navarre or Bandello at the time he wrote his drama. Its plot, he says, was suggested by a story he had heard when very young, of a lady, who, under uncom-

mon agonies of mind, waited on Archbishop Tillotson, revealed her crime, and besought his counsel in what manner she should act, as the fruit of her horrible artifice had lately been married to her son, neither party being aware of the relation that subsisted betwixt them. The prelate charged her never to let her son or daughter know what had passed. For herself he bade her almost despair. The dramatist has rather added to the horror and improbability of this tale, than mellowed it by softer shades; but his poem deserves much praise for strong expression, and powerful delineation of monastic cruelty and fraud.

36. Has usually been accounted the origin of Shakspeare's Twelfth Night. The rudiments, however, of the story of Bandello may be found in Cinthio. In the Ecatommithi of that author, a gentleman falling under the displeasure of the king of Naples, leaves that country with his two children, a boy and girl, who had a striking resemblance to each other. The vessel in which they had departed is shipwrecked, and the father is supposed to be lost, but the two children get safe to shore, and are brought up unknown to each other by two different persons who resided near the coast. The girl, when she grows up, falls in love with a young

man, and, by the intervention of an old woman, goes to serve him in the garb of a page, and is mistaken by her master for her brother, who had formerly been in his service, but had eloped in female disguise, to prosecute an intrigue in the neighbourhood. In Bandello the circumstances are more developed than in Cinthio, and bear a closer resemblance to the drama. An Italian merchant had two children, a boy and girl, so like in personal appearance, that when dressed in a similar manner, they could hardly be distinguished by their parents. The boy was lost in the sack of Rome by the Imperialists, being carried off by a German soldier. After this event, the father went with his daughter to reside at Aix, in Savoy. When the girl grows up, she has a lover of whom she is deeply enamoured, but who afterwards forsakes her. At this time her father being absent on business, and her faithless lover having lately lost a favourite attendant, by the intervention of her nurse she is received into his service in disguise of a page. She soon obtains the confidence of her master, and is employed by him to propitiate the rival who had supplanted her in his affections. This lady falls in love with the disguised emissary. Meanwhile the brother having obtained his liberty by the death

of his German master, comes in search of his father to Aix, where he is seen and courted by the female admirer of his sister, who, deceived by the resemblance, mistakes him for the object of her attachment. At length, by the arrival of the father, the whole mystery is cleared up. The lover returns to the mistress he had forsaken, and who had suffered so much for his sake, while the brother more than supplies his sister's place with her fair admirer. The disguise of the young lady, which is the basis of this tale, and the plot of Twelfth Night, is not improbable in the former, as it was assumed with the view of recalling the affections of a lover; but Viola, separated from her brother in a storm, and driven on an unknown coast, forms the wild project of engaging the affections of the duke, to whose person she was a stranger, and whose heart she understood was devoted to another. Influenced by no passion nor motive, she throws off the decorum of her sex, and serves the destined husband of Olivia in an useless and unworthy disguise. The love, too, of the duke's mistress for the disguised Viola, is more improbable from the circumstances of her situation and temper, than the passion of the Catella of the novelist. In Bandello, the brother has an

object in coming to Aix, where his father and sister resided, but it is difficult to assign a motive for Sebastian's journey to Illyria. It is also more likely, as in the novel, that a lover should return to a mistress he had forsaken, on receiving a striking instance of fidelity and tenderness, than that the duke should abandon a woman he passionately adored, and espouse a stranger, of whose sex he had hitherto been ignorant, and who had not even love to plead as an excuse for her transgression of the bounds of decorum [1] A lady disguised in boy's clothes, and serving her lover as a page, or otherwise, for the interests of her love, is one of the most common incidents in the Italian novels and our early British dramas. Besides Twelfth Night, and the Two Gentlemen of Verona, it is the foundation of Beaumont and Fletcher's Philaster, Shirley's Grateful Servant, School of Compliment, Maid's Revenge, &c.

Part III. 41. Story common in our English jest-books, of a Spaniard who asks part of a dinner for himself, giving his name at full length, and is told there are not provisions for so many people. In the English story I think he asks lodging.

[1] Shakspeare Illustrated, vol. II.

46. Is the most obscene story in Bandello, or perhaps in the whole series of Italian novels, yet it is said in the introduction, to have been related by Navagero to the princess of Mantua and duchess of Urbino.

47. Is from 4th of 8th of Boccaccio.

59. An Italian count, who had long doubted of his wife's fidelity, at length becomes assured of her constancy from her assiduous attendance during a long sickness, which had in fact been created by a poison she had administered. Being at length informed, however, by a domestic, that his wife embraced the opportunity of his confinement from illness to receive the visits of a lover, he is enabled to detect them together, and sacrifices both to his resentment. This tale is the first part of La Force d' Amitié, a story introduced by Le Sage in his Diable Boiteux.

Part IV. 17. Marquis of Ferrara prepares a mock execution, and the victim of this villainous jest expires from apprehension. A similar effect of terror forms the subject of Miss Baillie's play of the Dream, which is the second of her tragedies on Fear.

The ancestors of

NICOLAO GRANUCCI,[1]

being of the Guelph faction, were expelled from Lucca in the beginning of the 14th century, but afterwards returned and spread out into numerous branches, through the various states of Italy. It is from the circumstances of his family that this novelist deduces the origin of his stories, as he informs the reader, that being at Sienna in 1568, he went to the neighbouring town of Pienza, to enquire if there were any descendants of the Granucci settled there. He was conducted by two of the inhabitants to an abbey in the vicinity, and after his arrival, was carried to see the Villa de Trojano, by one of the monks, who, on the way, related a number of tales, of which at parting he presented a compendium in writing; and from this MS. Granucci asserts, that he afterwards formed his work, which was published at Venice, 1574. The 5th story of Granucci is from the 1st of Petrus Alphonsus. A son boasts

[1] La piacevol notte e lieto giorno, opera morale di Nicolao Granucci di Lucca.

of the number of his friends to his father, who advises him to try them, by putting a dead calf in a sack, and pretending that it is the corpse of a person he had murdered. When he asks his friends to assist him in concealing it, they unanimously decline doing any thing in the matter, but the service is undertaken by the sole friend of whom the father boasted. This story is older even than Alphonsus; I think it is of classical origin, and has been somewhere told of Dionysius of Syracuse and his son. Another story of Granucci is from the fabliau Du curé qui posa une pierre.

ASCANIO MORI DA CENO[1]

was a Mantuan, and passed his life in the service of the princes of Gonzaga, one of whom he followed to Hungary, when he went to attend the Emperor Maximilian in the wars against Solyman. He was an intimate friend of Torquato Tasso, and a curious extract from a letter addressed to him by that poet is given in Black's Life of Tasso (vol. II. p. 194). Ceno's novels, which are fifteen

[1] Prima parte dell' novelle di Ascanio Mori da Ceno.

in number, are dedicated to Vincenzo Gonzaga, prince of Mantua, noted as the assassin of Crichton and the patron of Tasso. The first part of his work was printed at Mantua, 1585, 4to. From the title it would appear that a second part was intended to have been added, but it was never written, or at least never published. The 3d novel is the common story of a messenger coming express with a pardon to a criminal, but who, having his attention diverted by the execution, which was commencing, does not deliver his orders till all is concluded. The 13th is the still better known story of two young men, who, during their father's absence, pretend that he is dead; they sit in deep mourning and apparent distress, and in consequence receive his country rents from the steward, who arrives with them.

CELIO MALESPINI,[1]

during his youth, was in some public employment at Milan, but afterwards resided at Venice, and finally passed into the service of Duke Francis of

[1] Ducento novelle del Signore Celio Malespini, nel quale si raccontano diversi avvenimenti; cosi lieti, come mesti e stravaganti.

Medici. Malespini was the first person who published the Jerusalem Delivered of Tasso, which he did in a very imperfect and mutilated manner, and without the consent of the poet. His novels, which amount to two hundred divided into two parts, were written about 1580, and published at Venice in 1609, 4to. He introduces them by telling that a party of ladies and gentlemen, who had fled from Venice during the plague in 1576, met in a palace in the *Contado di Trevizi*, where they chiefly amused themselves with relating stories. In N. 41, of the first part, there is a curious account of the amusements of the Compagnia della Calza, so called from a particular stocking which the members wore. This society, which existed in Italy during the 15th and 16th centuries, was neither, as some have imagined, a chivalrous nor academic institution, but merely an association for the purposes of public and private entertainments, as games, feasts, and theatrical representations. In course of time this university became divided into different fraternities, as the *Compagnia dei Floridi*, *Sempiterni*, &c., each of which was governed by particular laws and officers, and the members were distinguished by a certain habit.

Few of the tales of Malespini are original: long before the period of their publication, the Cent

Nouvelles Nouvelles had been written in France, and almost the whole of these have been inserted by Malespini in his novels; indeed he has translated them all except the 5th, 35th, 36th, 64th, 74th, and 93d. The correspondence of the tales in these two works will be best shown from the following table:—

Malespini.	C. N. N.	Malespini.	C. N. N.
2	is 62	43	65
5	13	44	16
6	97	45	3
8	68	46	87
9	69	47	29
10	53	49	37
14	52	57	10
15	4	58	98
17	33	61	88
18	8	65	92
19	73	67	75
20	27	75	60
23	32	78	45
26	42	79	21
27	44	80	14
32	81	81	79
33	54	86	72
35	59	88	23
36	24	90	34
37	28	91	63
38	19	92	78
39	77	93	85
40	20	94	71
42	58	95	83

Malespini.	C. N. N.
97	17
99	39
100	48
101	94

PART II.

1	56
3	90
5	55
7	84
8	22
10	31
12	100
13	70
16	47
18	49
19	26
25	51
27	99
29	18
35	67
40	38
43	40
47	6
49	41
51	43
52	30
53	1
56	25
57	2
59	96
61	61
62	89
63	57
66	46
67	50
68	12
70	15
73	82
74	80
75	66
77	7
79	76
81	86
88	95
89	11
96	9

Malespini, however, has levied contributions on other works than the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles. By this time the Diana Enamorada of Montemayor had appeared in Spain, and three of the longest tales are taken from that pastoral. In the first part, the 25th tale is borrowed from the intri-

cate loves of Ismenia Selvagio and Alanio, related in the Diana. The 36th of the second part is the Moorish episode of Xarifa, and the 94th is the story of the shepherdess Belisa. A few are also borrowed from the preceding Italian novelists. The 71st is from the 22d of the last part of Bandello, and others may be found in the Ecatommithi of Cinthio.

ANNIBAL CAMPEGGI

lived in the beginning of the 17th century. His first tale is as old as the Hecetopades, and is the story of the jealous husband who tied his wife to a post. The second is that of the Widow of Ephesus, related by Petronius Arbiter, and in the Seven Wise Masters (see above, vol. I. p. 126). It has been imitated in Italian by Eustachio Manfredi, in French by St Evremont and Fontaine, and forms the subject of an English drama of the commencement of the 17th century, entitled Women's Tears (Dodsley's Collection, vol. 6.) The story has been also inserted by John of Salisbury in his book, De Nugis Curialibus (b. 8, c. 11): he reports it as a historical incident, and cites Flavian as his authority for this assertion.

Subsequent to this period, there appeared but few Italian novels, and scarcely any of merit. From this censure I have only to except one striking tale, by Vincenzo Rota, a Paduan gentleman, of the last century. It is the story of a young man who fled from parents, who kept a small inn in a remote part of the Brescian territory. Having in course of time acquired a fortune by industry, he returned after an absence of twenty-five years, but concealed who he was on the first night of his arrival, and not being recognised, is murdered while asleep by his parents, for the sake of the treasure which his father found he had along with him. From the priest of the village, to whom alone their son had discovered himself, they learn with despair, on the following morning, the full extent of their guilt and misery. This tale was first printed by the Count Borromeo, a fellow-citizen of the author, in his Notizia de Novellieri Italiani da lui posseduti con alcune Novelle inedite Bassano, 1794. A similar story is related of a Norman innkeeper, in an obscure periodical publication, called the Visitor; and also forms the basis of the plot of the Fatal Curiosity, a tragedy by Lillo, in three acts, which Mr Harris, in his Philological Enquiries, says, "is the model of a perfect fable." The subject of this piece was taken

from an old pamphlet, entitled "News from Perin, in Cornwall, of a most bloody and unexampled Murther, very lately committed by a Father on his owne Sonne." Lillo's Fatal Curiosity has been imitated in a more recent tragedy, entitled The Shipwreck.

The Twenty-fourth of February, by the German dramatist Werner, is founded on a similar incident. A family of peasants residing in the solitudes of Switzerland, was pursued from father to son by a paternal malediction, on account of a dreadful atrocity committed by one of its forefathers, and was condemned to solemnize the 24th of February by the commission of some horrible crime. The third heir of this accursed generation had been the cause of his father's death on the fatal day. The son of this parricide returning with a treasure to the cottage after a long absence, is not recognized by his parent, and the father, by the murder of his son, for sake of his wealth, at midnight on the 24th of February, again solemnizes this strange anniversary.

No foreign productions have had such influence on English literature, as the early Italian novels with which we have been so long engaged. The best of these stories appeared in an English dress before the close of the reign of Elizabeth, either

by direct translation, or through the medium of French and Latin versions. Many of these were printed even before the translation of Belleforest's Grand Repertory of Tragical Narrations, which was published towards the end of the 16th century. The paraphrases, abridgements, and translations of Italian novels, contained in Paynter's Palace of Pleasure; Whetstone's Heptameron; Westward for Smelts; Grimstone's Admirable Histories, and other productions of the same nature, afforded a new species of literary gratification, as their merit consisted not merely in romantic invention, but the delineation of character, and an artful arrangement of events. They became the fashionable entertainment of all who yet preserved their relish for fiction, and who professed to read for amusement.

This is apparent even from a passage in the School-master of Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's celebrated preceptor, who complains, "that ten La Morte d' Arthures did not the tenth part so much harm as one of these books made in Italy, and translated in England. And that which is most to be lamented, and therefore more needful to be looked to, there be moe of these ungracious books set out in print within these few months, than have been seen in England many score years

before." Thus the popularity of these productions shook the fabric of Gothic romance, and directed the thoughts of our writers to new inventions. The legends of the minstrels contained much bold adventure, heroic enterprise, and strong touches of rude, though picturesque delineation; but they were defective in the disposition of circumstances, and those descriptions of characters and events, which, from their nearer analogy to truth, were demanded by a more discerning age. Accordingly, till the Italian novels became current, affecting and natural situations, the combination of incident, and pathos of catastrophe, were utterly unknown; and distress, especially that which arises from the conflicts of the tenderest of the passions, had not yet been exhibited in its most interesting forms. It was from the Italian novelists accordingly that our poets, particularly the dramatic, acquired ideas of a legitimate plot, and the multiplication of events necessary to constitute a tragic or a comic intrigue. We have already seen that the most popular comedies of Shakspeare have been derived, with little improvement in the incidents, from the stories of Boccaccio, Ser Giovanni, Cinthio, and Bandello. The spirit that pervades the works of his contemporary dramatists, has been drawn from similar sources.

The gayer inventions of the novelists may often be traced in the sprightly or humorous scenes of Beaumont and Fletcher, and the savage atrocity by which the Italian tales are sometimes distinguished, has unquestionably produced those accumulated horrors which characterize so many dramas of Shirley and of Ford.

But, although the Italian novels had such influence on the general literature of this country, I am not aware that they gave birth to any original work in a similar style of composition. In France, on the other hand, their effect may have been less universal; but, at an early period, they produced works of a similar description, of considerable merit and celebrity.

Of these the earliest is the CENT NOUVELLES NOUVELLES, tales which are full of imagination and gaiety, and written in a style the most *naive* and agreeable: Indeed, a good deal of the pleasure derived from their perusal, must be attributed to the wonderful charm of the old French language. They have formed the model of all succeeding tales in that tongue—of those of the queen of Navarre, and the authors by whom she has been imitated or followed.

These stories were first printed in folio, by Verard, without date, from a MS. of the year 1456.

They are said, in the introduction, to have been related by an assemblage of young noblemen, at the court of Burgundy, to which the dauphin, afterwards Lewis XI., retired, during the quarrel with his father. The relaters of these tales are M. Crequi, chamberlain of the duke, the Count de Chatelux, mareschal of France, the Count de Brienne, and a number of others. A few stories are also told by the duke himself, and by the dauphin, who, it is said, took care *de les faire recueiller, et de les publier*. The account of their having been verbally related by these persons of quality, is a fiction; but the fact, I believe, is, that they were written for the entertainment of the dauphin, at the time he retired to the court of Burgundy. Most of them are of a comic nature, and, I think, there are only five tragical tales in the whole collection.

1. Entitled *La Medaille à revers*, is from the Fabliaux Les Deux Changeurs, (Le Grand, 4, 173,) but had already been imitated by Ser Giovanni, in the 2d of the 2d of the Pecorone.

3. *La Peche del' Anneau* has suggested part of the 1st tale in the 6th Night of Straparola.

8. *Garce pour Garce* is from the Repensa merces in Poggio's Facetiae.

9. *La Mari Maquereau de sa Femme*, a story here told of a knight of Burgundy, is from the Fabliau Le Meunier d' Aleus, or the 206th of Sacchetti, (see above, vol. ii. p. 363.) It also corresponds with the 78th of Morlini, and the Vir sibi cornua promovens in the Facetiae of Poggio.

10. *Les Pastes d' Anguille*, is generally known by Fontaine's imitation under the same title.

11. *L' Encens au Diable*, which was originally told in the Facetiæ of Poggio, is equally well known as the former story, being the Hans Carvel's ring of Rabelais, Prior, and Fontaine. It is also related in the 5th satire of Ariosto.

12. *Le Veau* is Fontaine's Villageois qui cherche son veau, and Poggio's Asinus perditus.

14. *Le Faiseur de Papes ou L'Homme de Dieu* is Fontaine's L'Hermite.

16. *Le Borgne Aveugle*, here told of a knight of Picardy and his wife, is from the 8th of Petrus Alphonsus, or c. 121 of the Gesta Romanorum, (see above, vol. ii. p. 168.) It has been imitated in the 23d of the 1st part of Bandello, in the Italian novels of Giuseppe Orologi, entitled Successi Varii, lately published by Borromeo in his *Notizie*, and in the 6th of the Queen of Navarre, where, as in Orologi, the husband is a domestic of Charles, duke of Alençon.

19. *L'Enfant de Neige* is from the Fabliau de L' Enfant qui fondit au Soleil, (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 86.)

21. *L'Abbesse Guerie* is Fontaine's L'Abbesse Malade.

23. *La Procureuse passe la Raye* has been taken from the Fabliau du Curé qui posa une Pierre, (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 249.)

24. *La Botte Ademi*, is the story of a young woman, who being pursued and overtaken in a wood by an amorous knight, and seeing no hope of escape, offers to remain if he will allow her to pull off his boots: This being agreed to, she draws one of them half off, and thus effects her escape. This is part of the subject of an old English ballad, entitled, The Baffled Knight, or Lady's Policy, published in Percy's Relics.

32. *Les Dames Dismées* is the Cordeliers de Catalogne of Fontaine.

34. *Seigneur Dessus—Seigneur Dessous* is the Fabliau Du Clerc qui se cacha derriere un Coffre, (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 303.)

37. *Le Boudrier d' Ordure* is Fontaine's On ne s' Avise jamais de tout.

38. *Une Verge pour l' Autre* is from the 8th of 7th of Boccaccio. (See above, vol. ii. p. 312.)

50. *Change pour Change*. This is the story

which Sterne, in his Tristram Shandy, (vol. iv. c. 29,) says, is told by Selden. It was originally the 14th of Sacchetti, but there the woman is the young man's stepmother, instead of his grandmother.—" E questo," says he in his defence, " mio padre che ebbe a fare cotanto tempo con mia madre, e mai non gli disse una parola torta; ed ora perche mi ha trovato giacer con la moglie mi vuole uccidere come voi vedete." This is also the Justa Excusatio of the Facetiae of Poggio.

52. *Les Trois Monumens*, is merely translated from the 16th tale of Sacchetti. It is the story of a son who receives three advices from his father, which he disregards, and the consequences of his disobedience.

60. *Les Nouveaux freres Mineurs* is from the Fabliau Frere Denise Cordelier, (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 395.)

61. *Le Cocu Dupé*, from the first part of the Fabliau Les Cheveux coupés, by the Trouveur Guerin, (Le Grand, vol. ii. p. 280.)

69. *L'Honneste femme a Deux Maris.* A young gentleman of Flanders, while in the service of the king of Hungary, was taken prisoner and made a slave by the Turks. He had left a beautiful wife behind him in his own country, who, when all hopes of her husband's return had vanished, was

courted by many suitors. She long resisted their importunities, still fondly hoping that her husband was yet alive. At length, at the end of nine years, she was in a manner forced by his and her own relations to enter into a second marriage. A few months after the celebration of the nuptials, her first husband having escaped from slavery, arrived at Artois, and his wife hearing the intelligence, expired in paroxysms of despair. This is obviously the origin of Southern's celebrated tragedy of Isabella, and perhaps of the history of Donna Mencia de Mosquera, the lady whom Gil Blas delivers from the cave of the robbers.

78. *Le Mari Confesseur* is the Fabliau du Chevalier qui fist sa femme confesser: (Le Grand, vol. iv. p. 90,) for the various transmigrations of this story, (see above, vol. ii. p. 306.)

79. *L'Ane Retrouvé* is the Circulator of Poggio.

80. *La bonne Mesure* corresponds with Poggio's Aselli Priapus.

85. *Le Curé Cloué*, from the Fabliau le Forgeron de Creil, (Le Grand, 4, 124.)

88. *Le Cocu Sauvé*, from Fabliau La Borgoise d' Orleans, (Le Grand, 4, p. 287.) This is the Fraus Muliebris of Poggio.

90. *La Bonne Malade* is Poggio's Venia rite Negata.

91. *La Femme Obeissante* is his Novum Supplicii genus.

93. *La Postilone sur le Dos* is his Quomodo calceis Parcatur.

95. *Le Doit du Moine Gueri* is Poggio's Digiti Tumor. It thus appears that many of the Cent Nouvelles coincide with the Facetiae. I do not believe, however, that they were borrowed from that production, as they were written nearly at the same period that the Facetiae were related by Poggio and other clerks of the Roman chancery in the *Buggiale* of the Vatican; both were probably derived from stories which had become current in France and Italy by means of the Fabliaux of the Trouveurs.

96. *Le Testament Cynique.* A curate having buried his dog in the church-yard, is threatened with punishment by his superior. Next day he brings the prelate fifty crowns, which he says the dog had saved from his earnings, and bequeathed to the bishop in his testament. This story, which corresponds with the Canis Testamentum in Poggio's Facetiae, is from Le Testament de l' Ane, (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 107,) a fabliau of the Trou-

veur Rutebeuf, to whom it probably came from the east, as it is told by a very ancient Turkish poet, Lamai, also called Abdallah Ben Mamoud, author of a collection of Facetiae and Bon Mots, in five chapters. It has been imitated in Le Chien de Sahed, one of Gueulette's Contes Tartares, and is also told in the history of Don Raphael, in Gil Blas.

It is thus evident that a great proportion of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles are derived from those inexhaustible stores of fiction, the Fabliaux of the Trouveurs; and as only a small selection has been published by Le Grand and Barbazan, it may be conjectured that many more are borrowed from fabliaux which have not yet seen the light, and may probably remain for ever buried in the French libraries.

The Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles never were translated into English: Beatrice, indeed, in Much Ado about Nothing, suspects she will be told she had her good wit out of the Hundred Merry Tales, which led Shakspeare's commentators to suppose that this might be some version of the Cent Nouvelles, which was fashionable in its day, but had afterwards disappeared. An old black-letter book, however, entitled, "A Hundreth Mery Tales," to which Beatrice probably alludes,

was lately picked up from a bookseller's stall in England, and it proves to be a totally different work from the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles.

The Tales of the Queen of Navarre, written in imitation of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, were first published under the title of Histoire des Amans Fortunés, in 1558, which was nine years after the death of their author.

These stories are the best known and most popular in the French language, a celebrity for which they were probably as much indebted to the rank and distinguished character of the author, as to their intrinsic merit. The manner in which they are introduced, is sufficiently ingenious, and bears a considerable resemblance to the frame of the Canterbury Tales. In the month of September, the season in which the baths of the Pyrenees begin to have some efficacy, a number of French ladies and gentlemen assembled at the springs of Caulderets. At the time when it was customary to return, there came rains so uncommon and excessive, that a party who made an attempt to arrive at Therbes, in Gascony, finding the streams swollen, and all the bridges broken down, were obliged to seek shelter in the monastery De Notre Dame de Serrance, on the Pyrenees. Here they were forced to remain till a bridge should be thrown over an

impassable stream. As they were assured that this work would occupy ten days, they resolved to amuse themselves meanwhile with relating stories every day, from noon till vespers, in a beautiful meadow near the banks of the river Gave.

The number of the company amounted to ten, and there were ten stories related daily; the amusement was intended also to have lasted ten days, in order to complete the hundred novels, whence the book has been sometimes called Les Cent Nouvelles de la Reine de Navarre; but, in fact, it stops at the 73d tale, near the commencement of the 8th day. The conversations on the characters and incidents of the last related tale, and which generally introduce the subject of the new one, are much longer than in the Italian novels, and, indeed, occupy nearly one half of the work. Some of the remarks are quaint and comical, others are remarkable for their *naiveté*, while a few breathe the conceits of the Italian sonnetteers: Thus, "it is said that jealousy is love, but I deny it, for though jealousy be produced by love, as ashes are by fire, yet jealousy extinguishes love, as ashes smother the flame."

Of the tales themselves, few are original; for, except about half a dozen which are historically true, and are mentioned as having fallen under

the knowledge and observation of the Queen of Navarre, they may all be traced to the Fabliaux, the Italian novels, and the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles. Few are either of a serious or atrocious description—they consist for the most part in contrivances for assignations—amorous assaults ingeniously repelled—intrigues ingeniously accomplished or ludicrously detected. Through the whole work, the monks, especially the Cordeliers, are treated with much severity, and are represented as committing, and sometimes with impunity, even when discovered, the most cruel, deceitful, and immoral actions. When we have already seen ecclesiastical characters treated with much contumely by private writers, in the age, and near the seat, of papal supremacy, it will not excite surprise that they should be so represented by a queen, who was a favourer of the new opinions, and an enemy to the Romish superstitions.

But while so many tales of the queen of Navarre have been borrowed from earlier productions, they appear in their turn to have suggested much to subsequent writers. Thus, the 8th tale, which is from the fabliau of Le Meunier d'Aleus, and also occurs in the Facetiæ of Poggio, in Sacchetti, and the 9th of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, seems the version of the story which has

suggested the plot of Shirley's comedy of the Gamester, (afterwards printed under the title of The Gamesters,) where Mrs Wilding substitutes herself for Penelope, with whom her husband had an assignation, and he, to discharge a game debt, gives up the adventure to his friend Hazard. The 36th story concerning the President of Grenoble, which is taken from the 6th novel of the 3d decade of Cinthio, or the 47th of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, has suggested to the same dramatist that part of his Love's Cruelty, which turns on the concealment of Hippolito's intrigue with Clariana, by the contrivance of her husband.

The 30th coincides with the 35th of the 2d part of Bandello, and the plot of Walpole's Mysterious Mother, (see above, vol. ii. p. 462.)

38. Which was originally the 72d tale of Morlini, is the story of a lady whose husband went frequently to a farm he had in the country. His wife suspecting the cause of his absence, sends provisions and all accommodations to the mistress for whose sake he went to the farm, in order to provide for the next visit, which has the effect of recalling the alienated affections of her husband. This story is in the MS. copy of the Varii Successi of Orologi, mentioned by Borromeo. The French and Italian tales agree in the most minute circumstances, even

in the name of the place where the lady resided, which is Tours in both. This tale is related in a colloquy of Erasmus, entitled Uxor Μεμψιγαμος sive Conjugium. It also occurs in Albion's England, a poem, by William Warner, who was a celebrated writer in the reign of Queen Elizabeth: those stanzas, which contain the incident, have been extracted from that poetical epitomé of British history, and published in Percy's Relics, under the title of the Patient Countess.

La Servante Justifiée of Fontaine, is from the 45th novel of this collection. It was probably taken from the fabliau of some Trouveur, who had obtained it from the east, as it corresponds with the story of the shopkeeper's wife in Nakshebi's Persian tales, known by the name of Tooti Nameh, or Tales of a Parrot. Another tale of the Queen of Navarre has a striking resemblance to the story of Theodosius and Constantia, whose loves and misfortunes have been immortalized by Addison and Sterne.

There were few works of any celebrity, written in France in imitation of the tales of the Queen of Navarre. The stories in the Nouvelles Recreations ou Contes Nouveaux have been generally attributed to Bonaventure des Perriers, one of the domestics of that princess; but in the

edition 1733, it is shown that they were written by Nicholas Denysot, a French painter. They are not so long as those of the Queen of Navarre, and consist for the most part in epigrammatic conclusions, brought about by a very short relation. It is amusing, however, to trace in them the rudiments of our most ordinary jest books. The following story, which occurs in the Nouvelles Recreations, may be found in almost every production of the kind from the Facetiae of Hierocles, to the last Encyclopædia of Wit. An honest man in Poictiers sent his two sons for their improvement to Paris. After some time they both fell sick; one died, and the survivor, in a letter to his father, said, 'This is to acquaint you that it is not I who am dead, but my brother William, though it be very true that I was worse than he.' It has been said that Porson once intended to publish Joe Miller with a commentary, in order to show that all his jests were derived originally from the Greek. This he could not have done, but they may be all easily traced to Greek authors, the Eastern Tales, or the French and Italian novels of the 15th and 16th centuries.

Among the French tales of the 16th century may be mentioned the Contes Amoureux of Jeanne Flore; Le Printemps de Jaques Yver, pub-

lished in 1572; L' Eté de Benigne Poissenot, 1583, and Les Facetieuses Journées, of Gabriel Chapuis.

The more serious and tragic relations of the Italians were diffused in France during the 16th century, by means of the well-known work of Belleforest, and were imitated in the Histoires Tragiques of Rosset, one of whose stories is the foundation of the most celebrated drama of Ford, who has indeed chosen a revolting subject, yet has represented perhaps in too fascinating colours the loves of Giovanni and Annabella.

Les Histoires Prodigieuses de Boaistuau, published in 1561, seems to be the origin of such stories as appear in the Wonders of Nature, Marvellous Magazine, &c. We are assured that, in the Hebrides, wheat grows on the tops of the trees, and that the leaves, when they fall to the ground, are immediately changed to singing birds: there are besides a good many relations of monstrous births. There is also the common story of a person who was drowned by mistaking the echo of his own cry, for the voice of another. Arriving on the bank of a river, he asked loudly, " s'il n'y avoit point de peril a passer?—*Passez*—Est ce par ici?—*par ici.*

Towards the close of the 16th, and beginning

of the 17th century, a prodigious multitude of tales were written in Spain, in imitation of the Italian novels: "Troppo in lungo anderebbe," says Lampillas, (Saggio Storico del. let. Spagnuola, part ii. tom. 3. p. 195,) "se io volessi accennare il portentoso numero di novelle Spagnuole uscite a quei tempi, e trasportate nelle pui colte lingue d' Europa." These Spanish novels are generally more detailed in the incidents than their Italian models, and have also received very considerable modifications from the manners and customs of the country in which they were produced. Those compositions, which in Italy presented alternate pictures of savage revenge, licentious intrigue, and gross buffoonery, are characterized by a high romantic spirit of gallantry, and jealousy of family honour, but above all, by constant nocturnal scuffles on the streets. The tales of Gerardo, the Novelas Exemplares of Cervantes, the Prodigios y Successos d'Amor of Montalvan, and the Novelas Amorosas of Camerino, all written towards the end of the sixteenth, or commencement of the seventeenth century, are scarcely less interesting than the French or Italian tales, in illustrating the manners of the people, the progress of fiction, and its transmission from the novelist to the dramatic poet. Beaumont and

Fletcher have availed themselves as much of the novels of Gerardo and Cervantes, as of the tales of Cinthio or Bandello, and many of their most popular productions, as the Spanish Curate, Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, Chances, Love's Pilgrimage, and Fair Maid of the Inn may be easily traced to a Spanish original. I fear, however, that to protract this investigation would be more curious than profitable, as enough has already been said to establish the rapid and constant progress of the stream of fiction, during the periods in which we are engaged, and its frequent transfusion from one channel of literature to another.

Indeed, I have perhaps already occupied the reader longer than at first may seem proper or justifiable, with the subject of Italian tales, and the imitations of them. But, besides their own intrinsic value, as pictures of morals and of manners, other circumstances contributed to lead me into this detail. In no other species of writing is the transmission of fable, and, if I may say so, the commerce of literature, so distinctly marked. The larger works of fiction resemble those productions of a country which are consumed within itself, while tales, like the more delicate and precious articles of traffic, which are exported from their native soil, have gladdened and delighted every land.

They are the ingredients from which Shakspeare, and other enchanters of his day, have distilled those magical drops which tend so much to sweeten the lot of humanity, by occasionally withdrawing the mind, from the cold and naked realities of life, to visionary scenes and visionary bliss.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

I have subjoined a note of the prices which the romances of chivalry, and a few of the Italian Tales, mentioned in the preceding volumes, brought at the sale of the Roxburgh library :—

	£.	s.	d.
Roman du San Graal et de Merlin, MS. magnifique sur velin, relié en 2 grands vol. fol. enrichi de 32 Miniatures, et les Lettres initiales peintes en couleurs rehaussées d' or,	38	17	0
L' Hystoire du Sainct Greal, fol. Paris 1516,	17	17	0
Perceval Le Galloys, fol. Paris 1530, . .	15	15	0
Lancelot du Lac, 3 vol. in 1, fol. Paris 1533,	21	0	0
Le Roman de Meliadus de Leonoys, MS. tres ancien, sur velin, fol.	12	0	0
L' Histoire de Tristan, filz du noble Roy Meliadus de Leonois, fol. Paris, Verard .	32	0	6
Ysaie Le Triste, fol. Paris; Galyot de Pre .	15	0	0
Ysaie Le Triste, 4to	6	10	0
Le Roman du Roy Artus, fol. MS. .	37	16	0
Roman de Giron le Courtois, fol. Paris, Ant. Verard	33	12	0
L' Histoire de Perceforest Roy de la Grande Bretaigne, fol. 6 vol. en 3, Paris 1528	30	0	0

	£.	s.	d.
Artus de Bretaigne, fol. MS. de 15 Siecle .	2	2	0
L. Histoire de Cleriadus et Meliadice 4, Lyons 1529	7	12	0
Cleriadus et Meliadice, fol. MS. . .	4	5	0
Recueil des Romans des Chevaliers de la Table Ronde, MS. sur velin en 3 vol. folio, contenant Le Roman du San Graal, Hist. de Merlin ; Le Roman de Lancelot du Lac, &c., ce Recueil est enrichi de 747 Miniatures avec les initiales peintes en or et couleurs	78	15	0
Collection des Romans contenant; Le Roman de Brut d' Angleterre ; Du Roi Artus ; De Giron le Courtois, &c. MS. sur velin de l' an, 1391, relié en 2 grands vol. fol. enrichi de 105 miniatures et les initiales peintes en or	57	15	0
Les Faits et Gestes de Huon de Bourdeaulx, fol. Paris 1516	20	5	0
L' Hystoire de Guerin de Monglave, 4to, Paris	3	1	0
Galyen Restauré, 4to, Paris . . .	8	0	0
Milles et Amys, fol. Paris, Verard . .	14	0	0
Milles et Amys, 4to.	3	0	0
Les Faits et Prouesses de Jourdain de Blaves, fol. Paris 1520	12	12	0
La Fleur des Batailles ou L' Histoire de Dolin de Mayence, 4to, Paris . . .	8	0	0
Ogyer le Dannoys, 4to, Paris . . .	3	11	0
L' Hystoire de Regnault de Montauban, fol. edition tres ancienne . .	32	11	0
L' Histoire de Maugis d' Aygremont, 4to	6	0	0

	£.	s.	d.
L' Hystoire de Petit Jehan de Saintré, fol. Paris 1517	16	5	6
Le Roman de Jason et Medée, fol. ed. tres ancienne	21	10	6
L' Hystoire du Roy Alexandre Le Grand	1	14	0
Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes, par Raoul le Fevre, fol.	116	11	0
The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye, by Raoul le Fevre, translated and printed by Caxton, fol. 1471	1060	10	0
L' Arbre de Batailles par H. Bonnet, fol. Lyons 1481	12	12	0
Le Ciento Novelle Antike, 4to, Bologna 1525,	23	10	0
Il Decamerone di Boccaccio, fol. ediz. prim. Venet Valdarfer 1471	2260	0	0
Il Decamerone di Boccaccio, 8vo, ediz. vera Firenze. Giunti, 1527	29	0	0
Cinquante Novelle di Massuccio Salernitano,	5	15	6
Hecatommithi di Giraldi Cinthio, 2 tom. 8, Monte-Regale 1565	11	0	0
Le Novelle di Bandello, 3 vol. 4to, et 1 vol. 8vo, Lucca 1554	29	0	0
Morlini Novellæ, 4to. Neap. 1520 .	48	0	0
Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, fol. Verard .	15	13	0

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

L9–100m-9,'52(A3105)444

AA 000 032 131 5

PN
3451
D92h
1816
v.2